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Current Comments

Peace Pacts

A LOT of nonsense is being talked about pacts against war. I should have thought it elementary that war is a breach of the peace, which, in other or diplomatic words, means a breach of a pact. How any pact can effectively provide against a breach of a pact passes human, though evidently it does not pass diplomatic, understanding. The limitations of the diplomatic intelligence are, however, poor compensation to the taxpayer for money misspent and misapplied. The simple truth is that war is an instrument of policy and that no nation can abjure war unless it is prepared to sacrifice its ideals or its duty either to its convenience or to a mere desire for comfort. Please God, the necessity for war will not arise again in our time, but we cannot so easily rid ourselves of potential responsibilities. We can sign any pact we like, but pacts not morally binding on the general body of citizens are merely scraps of paper, and no pact can be morally binding which binds succeeding generations to the surrender of their rights, in even the most hypothetical circumstances. It is essential that we of this generation should understand the situation, else we may land our successors in a difficulty. The British Empire cannot effectively surrender its freedom of action in the future, and it would not be merely dishonourable, but also futile to pretend that we could. Of pretences are born wars; peace is born of understanding.

THE mischievous part of the craze for pacts and treaties, born at Versailles and fostered by the League of Nations, is that every new instrument of peace multiplies the possible causes of international friction and adds to the number of parties whom any dispute must concern. There may be safety in numbers, of course, and the chance of a really small war breaking out may now perhaps be considered negligible, but is this a safeguard of world-wide peace or of the salaries of the officials of the League of Nations? The plain fact is that Europe has drifted once again into a network of entangling alliances and counter-alliances which will never of themselves ensure peace, as four centuries of European history prove, but may, on the contrary, lead some innocent parties into the next war. The element of publicity now involved in diplomacy is no safeguard in this respect. It is easier for a nation to "climb down" in secret than in the limelight. When will people begin to tell the truth about Geneva? One piece of the truth is that since the establishment of the League, England, France, Spain, Greece, Russia, Turkey, Poland, and China have all been engaged in long and costly wars, while international susceptibilities have grown increasingly tender throughout Europe. It is not suggested that the League could have prevented these conflicts, which, like all other wars, had their causes in history and the follies of men. But it is suggested, and most emphatically, that the League may be equally unable to prevent further wars, and no pact setting up a rival to the covenant is likely to do better. Why, therefore, multiply *casus belli* if we get as a reward no increased security that when the "case" arises, it will be peacefully solved?

The Folly of Treaties

THE "Royal Oak" affair is not, as some wiseacres are suggesting, merely comic. The facts may be as trivial as they are unpleasant, but the case raises a point of principle. Has a junior officer the right to complain of the conduct of his superior officer? If so, the only possible criterion of justification in a particular case must be the merits of that case. In our comments we have in mind only

The "Royal Oak"

the case of Captain Dewar, since in the case of the other officer concerned other questions arose. Captain Dewar, however, was convicted on two grounds, neither of them in any way whatsoever compatible with the right, in principle, to make or forward a complaint. The first was that some of the incidents complained of were ancient history, and the second, that the document forwarded was critical and therefore contrary to the regulations. If the verdict of the Court Martial stands, no junior officer can in future ever lodge a complaint against his superior unless his superior's misconduct is of such an order that the mere mention of one action of his would be sufficient to force higher authorities to action. The cases, however, which are of the greatest importance are not those which come in this category. They are those of incompetent, dilatory, or inconsiderate commanders, whose qualities, displayed over a long period, breed disaffection and impair fighting efficiency. Those who served on land in the last war can recall the names (they are happily very few) of one or two commanders of that type whose unfitness for their post was known literally to every private soldier in their command, but was apparently quite genuinely unknown to their superiors. In most of these cases complaints were made, usually by backstairs methods and with correspondingly greater effect. But these methods are wholly undesirable, and, indeed, unthinkable, among professional soldiers and sailors. What is the alternative? The alternative obviously is to do what Captain Dewar did, but not what Admiral Collard's superiors did. The complaint was justified if the facts were true—an issue which has not been tried—but the publicity given to the affair by the action of the higher command is wholly unjustifiable. If the Board of Admiralty collectively were subject to the same discipline as Captain Dewar, no court in the world would acquit them of action contrary to good order and discipline.

Coal—The Last Phase

THREE recent articles in the *Times* on the South Wales coalfields are of first-class importance. The fact that there are in a very small area probably 70,000 miners for whom employment can never again be found in the Welsh mines is sufficiently serious. That these men and

their families are living, partly on unemployment benefit and partly on the Guardians, is also serious. The most significant fact, however, is that the Guardians (although many Boards have a Labour majority) are allowing, as a rule, no relief to single men, and to a family of four not more than 16s. a week. Despite this grim and tragic lesson in practical economics, the whole population is still united in its faith in Mr. Cook. It would, of course, be fantastic to put on that gentleman's shoulders, which are none too broad, all the blame for the present situation. It is, however, perhaps the worst feature of all that among his own people, whom he has unquestionably assisted to their ruin, he is still respected. For underneath this respect lies an invincible determination of the miners in South Wales to face life alone. The miners are, in very truth, not members of a profession, but members of a separate community. They are as much cut off in sentiment from other trade unionists as from any other class, and their attitude to the general public is that of a neutral State whose territory has been devastated in a great war and who looks for reparation in cash and kind from his neighbours simply as a right. The miners, in short, want nationalization because they claim work and maintenance. During the years of good trade, from 1907 onwards, the mining population increased; but to a great extent mining is an hereditary industry, and we have to deal in South Wales (as also in Durham and in parts of Scotland) in the main with settled communities of fixed habits. No finer men exist in the country, but they cannot be moved from their belief in the justice of their claims on the community as a whole. What is the community as a whole going to do? The fund which has been started for the relief of distress is an anomaly, because the relief of destitution is a statutory obligation on the Guardians; yet it is hard to see any immediate alternative.

Industrial Transference

THE problem is of the first importance because we are at the beginning of an age which will see many similar troubles. The age of coal and iron is passing, and the age when we dominated the Eastern export markets is past. Those who look to international action to raise rates of wages abroad are living in a fool's paradise. The

causes of the depression in the coal trade are permanent, and any attempted solution in the direction of forcing up the world-price of coal by artificial means can only lead Europe nearer to bankruptcy. Whether the execution of this policy is sought by means of a producers' cartel, or by international Labour action, is immaterial. Rationalization and syndicalism sound very different, but will, in this case at least, have identical results. A thorough reorganization of our domestic mining industry is no doubt overdue; but if this suffices to keep in permanent employment at decent wages those miners at present employed it will do perhaps more, and certainly as much, as the experts expect. The problem of the starving communities in South Wales and Durham will remain until it is solved by other agencies than private charity or a State subsidy. It sounds statesmanlike to invoke Time as a healer, but when men are near to starvation, Time is an enemy. It is interesting to know that the Greek Government, confronted only five years ago with an even vaster problem, has already settled several hundreds of thousands of refugees from Asia Minor. Mr. Baldwin's Industrial Transference Board has a harder task, because the miners' standard of living is higher, but it will be unfortunate if what the Greek Civil Service has done by hundreds of thousands ours cannot do even by tens of thousands. And what is Mr. Amery, in his intervals of residence in this country, doing in the matter? Emigration today is half what it was before the war.

The Effrontery of the I.L.P.

THE effrontery of the I.L.P. in passing resolutions in favour of the surtax and the capital levy is amazing. This body claims to be the brains of the Labour movement, and their members know perfectly well that the capital levy will form no part of their Parliamentary party's programme at the next election. The obvious hope is to gain votes from the extremists by advocating the levy as a member of one organization, and from the moderates by repudiating it in the name of another. A more shabby political dodge has not been attempted, and it is particularly shabby in that its utility lies, not so

much in its appeal to cupidity (which would be nothing new), as in its appeal to simple-minded fanatics who really believe that there is a reserve of wealth which has only to be tapped for the land to flow with milk and honey. Mr. Wise and his friends are not simple-minded fanatics—they are singularly cold-blooded politicians. The situation offers an acid test of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's statesmanship—we trust he will not turn out to be Wise after the event.

The End of Representative Government

THE Franchise Bill goes through with a minority of no more than ten. Its passage was inevitable, and, indeed, the Bill was not much worse than its predecessor. Wisdom does not come with years. History, however, will find much cause for laughter and some, perhaps, for tears in the tone of the arguments used in the House and in the Press. Not even all of those who opposed the measure seem to realize that political democracy as our model, so far from being a proved success, is much nearer to being a proved failure, and that it has in actual fact proved to have defects which the new measure, like that of 1918, must enormously enhance. If journalists and politicians would forget the optimistic later Victorians and go a little farther back to Aristotle, they would find there some pertinent remarks on democracy generally and on the size of constituencies in particular. To leave aside entirely the major question of the wisdom of counting heads as a means of attaining wisdom, how can anyone "represent," in any serious sense of the term, constituencies as vast as those now created? Representation demands small homogeneous constituencies with a local life of their own and a tangible measure of civic spirit. It also demands an electorate sufficiently small for candidates to be seen and heard in it. Our present franchise is not the completion, it is the final deathblow of *representative* government. Instead, our House of Commons must become a fortuitous aggregation of delegates put up by the machines and voted for on a ticket by people who have never seen them and whom they have never seen. With this state of affairs the personal responsibility of the Member of Parliament,

still fitfully divided between constituents and party, will in a few years be given to party alone, and the final apotheosis of Mr. Gladstone's dreams will be the dictatorship of alternating juntas of wire-pullers. This may be a fine thing—they like it in Chicago—but the Press ought at least to let the public know where they are going.

Air Non-Sense

CAPTAIN GUEST is worried about the development of an air-sense in the British public. The admission that ordinary sense as applied to air problems is not likely to lead the taxpayer as quickly along the path of enhanced subsidies as air fanatics desire is gratifying. "Not 1 per cent," he complained, "of the possible Civil aviation programmes has been started." Why in the world not? The answer is simple. In Captain Guest's language we lack air-sense. In every one else's language we are free people who like to travel and send our goods by the quickest, cheapest, and most efficient routes. As soon as people want air transport facilities sufficiently to pay the cost of maintaining them, they will come into existence. Till then for "possible" read "impossible."

A Ministry of Defence

MR. BALDWIN'S admission that a higher strategy is determined by some score of arbitrarily appointed sub-committees of the Committee of Imperial Defence is alarming. We have a vivid recollection of this kind of governmental machinery in Mr. Lloyd George's days. Its dominant characteristic is that it is at once inefficient and irresponsible. The follies of Government departments can be at least held in check by Parliament and the Press. Sub-committees of officials reporting in their hundreds to a Prime Minister who cannot possibly have time to read their recommendations lead straight to uncontrollable chaos. Either, in practice, the views of two or three fairly junior officials are accepted without examination, or the Cabinet takes an independent decision without regard to "expert" advice, simply because it is not satisfied (often justly) that the officials in question are wiser than they are. When will Englishmen learn the truth that the crying need in government is machinery,

not men? The problem is not to discover the ultimate wisdom, but to create a channel through which the ordinary common-sense of ordinary people can flow upward with criticism of the right kind applied to it as it flows. On this need rests the case—and it is strong—for a Ministry of Defence. At present, as Mr. Baldwin has disclosed, the three Service Ministries have in effect to have as a superior co-ordinating authority a Prime Minister advised by the Chiefs of Staff sub-committee. This is workable in peace-time, but in war-time it is quite certain that it will not be. The Chiefs of Staff will be too busy to serve, and the Prime Minister will be advised by their deputies, or, more probably, by his own nominees. On this forecast we shall be thrown back at once into the chaos of the "Garden City" regime. The only alternative is the creation of an Imperial Staff specializing in all branches of the higher strategy and responsible to a Minister of Defence who is in turn responsible to Parliament. The line between the higher strategy—the choice of objectives—and the lesser strategy—the choice of ways and means—is quite clear-cut. The lesser strategy remains the proper function of the separate Services. The argument that the Prime Minister himself would have in war-time to be Minister of Defence seems to be mistaken. The Prime Minister's chief and most responsible function will be to appoint the Minister of Defence and to remove him if he fails in his task. Only thus shall we avoid the tolerance of inefficiency in the interests (themselves very important) of political stability. It is to be hoped that this vital question will not be allowed to drop.

Visit Egypt

TRAVELLING through the north of France last week, I was met in every village near a railway with hideous entreaties, in staring blue and white, to visit Egypt. This strange feature of the Continental landscape suggests a new trend of civilization. It is bad enough to be urged by the tame poet of the Southern Railway to "Live in Surrey free from worry," but when one has made the only reply and left for France, it is hard to be admonished in this way. Incidentally, the appeals, for all their

commendable brevity, disfigure the countryside. Is this part of the price we pay for Egypt's independence, or is it merely excess of zeal on the part of the hotel industry? Anyway, I trust the habit will not spread. When I finally do reach Egypt, I don't want to be confronted with a brusque instruction on every Pyramid to visit Tibet. One must stop somewhere.

The Civil Service Again

THE Civil Service is in trouble again, this time because the telegraph service doesn't pay, and will never do so, in the view of an investigating committee of business men, until Civil Service conditions are changed—security of tenure is the enemy of efficiency. I wonder! Lord Fisher used to preach that favouritism was the secret of efficiency. Sir Hardman Lever finds it apparently in the anxiety of employees. To a student of human nature this is quite unconvincing, and I venture to deny it absolutely. Lord Fisher's saying goes to the root of the matter. It is the failure to favour efficiency at all costs and at all times which is the cardinal fault of the Civil Service, which is admittedly worked on the principle that reasons *against* promotion must be given if seniority is to be ignored. A simple direction by the Government for the reversal of this principle would cure half the troubles of Whitehall, and amid the protests of innumerable Whitley Councils the public services would go forward with 50 per cent. greater efficiency. Here is a chance for Mr. Winston Churchill. A Treasury minute is all that is required.

Science and Finance

THE formation of a private financing company by the Imperial Chemical Industries Company and the Chase Securities Corporation of New York is of exceptional interest, since it marks another stage in the recognition of the need for associating the technical and professional expert with all stages of modern business. The days of the business man *sans phrase* are, in fact, over. The whole difference between profit and loss in large businesses working on a low margin and a vast turnover is settled too often by purely technical or professional efficiency

for it to be safe for the "lay mind" to be predominant in management. The new development extends the principle to the financing of industrial undertakings. The lay mind remains in control of the banks, with the result that the banks must either act in the dark or not act at all, when it comes to industrial developments of the newer kind. The lesson is one which should be taken widely to heart, and by none more than by the Press. The decline of the influence of the Press on serious opinion is primarily due to the fact that the modern editor has not got a call on independent experts and has adopted the habit of employing outside experts who are not independent and whose views are already known. "The public has a right to know" is a favourite watchword of leader-writers; but the public cannot know until Fleet Street itself knows a great deal more than it does at present. There is nothing useful that can be said today, even about politics, in purely general terms. And there is at least as much "news value" in facts as in pious opinions and jejune generalizations.

The Amazing Mr. Curtis

NOTHING more astounding than Mr. Lionel Curtis's speech to the shareholders of the Commonwealth Trust has been printed in the *Times* for many a long day. This gentleman is associated with the establishment of diarchy in India, and of the Free State Government in part of Ireland. He has also written an immense work pleading for a federal constitution for the British Empire, a peripatetic Empire Parliament, and an Empire Cabinet. His record is hardly an enviable one, and his consistent failure to bring his opinions into harmony with facts of which every educated man is aware should now be apparent to him. But he is, it seems, still confident of his own transcendent wisdom, and he has thought fit to burst into what is probably the most impudent tirade against public men ever published in the *Times*. He has added to his offence by attacks on the Colonial Office officials, who cannot reply (as the other gentlemen and newspapers concerned have already done with crushing effect). Briefly, Mr. Curtis's charge is that the Government's decision to return to the Basle Trading Corporation the properties illegally taken from them during

the war and vested in the Commonwealth Trust is the result of an intrigue between the foreign directors of the Basle Corporation and a number of our public men (*Truth* and the *Nation* were mentioned). It was said that this intrigue was carried through, either owing to the supineness or with the corrupt complicity, of the permanent officials of the Colonial Office. Mr. Curtis's methods may be judged by the fact that he does not specifically charge anyone with corruption, but he calls for explanations and an inquiry on oath, and throws in a timely reference to the "francs case." It is true that an inquiry is called for, but only into three points. The first is why the assets of the Basle Trading Corporation were ever confiscated. The second is why Mr. Lionel Curtis was ever associated with the management of the Trust in which these assets were vested. The third is why the *Times* appears to support Mr. Curtis in his present outrageous attitude.

A Foolish Experiment Ends

THE Cabinet decision on rubber marks the inevitable end of one of the most foolish pieces of wanton interference by a Government department with private business enterprise which even our age has had to endure. That a position should be allowed to grow up in which a couple of Civil Servants can by an arbitrary decision depreciate the market values of the British investor's holdings in a great industry by some tens of millions is a damning commentary on our methods of government. It is particularly damning because the decision for "de-control" was unquestionably right. The loss occasioned by it was simply the measure of the original error. Once more we learn the same old lesson—that there is no compromise possible between public and private ownership. The Government, be it noted, only did in the first instance what the industry asked them to do; but by doing it they accepted a liability to British investors which the British taxpayer, rightly and inevitably, could never allow them to meet. Hence these tears. The Government have merely taken their courage in both hands and cut someone else's loss. In doing so they have made the best of someone else's bad job. But the authority of Governments reposes, like that of other

institutions, on credit, and in an age which is at the best intolerant of authority these foolish excursions are likely to have widely damaging results.

Facts for Socialists.

Sir Arthur Balfour's committee on British Trade has issued another immense report containing a wealth of material for Utopia-mongers in the shape of statistics so various that a skilful clerk can produce any required result. Like the report of the Liberal Industrial Inquiry, this volume contains much information of value to those who have businesses of their own to run. Most such, however, will think themselves too busy to read the book, which will only be read widely by young men and women who want to run other people's businesses at the tax-payers' expense. The most interesting figures given in the report are those which show the rate of increase in labour costs per unit of output compared with the rate of increase in actual wages, and those which relate the per head production to the increase in mechanical power. The figures given appear to disprove conclusively two fundamental assumptions of social reformers. The first is the "economy of high wages"; and the second is the belief in the possibility of increasing materially the general average of wealth by the systematic adoption of mechanical means of production. Higher wages and more mechanical power have combined to increase the unit cost of labour and to decrease (relatively to the capital employed) the per head production. Of course, the figures in reality prove only what every one knew before—that we shall not get richer till we work harder, and that if we take our reward in leisure, we can't take it in goods as well. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, who appointed the Balfour Commission, will no doubt lose no time in bringing this report to the notice of his followers.

Personalities in Journalism

The death of Mr. E. R. Thompson ("E. T. Raymond"), editor of the *Evening Standard*, is likely to prove a severe blow to that excellent paper. The personal element threatens to fade out of journalism, probably because the better organization of news' services and the decline of the

public interest in serious affairs are tending to make the earlier stages of the journalist's career less attractive than before. It was remarkable, for instance, that the war in Morocco was not of sufficient interest to the general public to justify any individual newspaper keeping a war correspondent on the spot. And with the triumph of news' agencies has gone the "scoop." Yet personal journalism will always triumph over impersonal, and the public would always rather read an article by E. T. Raymond or Dean Inge with which they disagree than a mellifluous "leader" column which echoes their own breakfast-table platitudes. Without an editorial chair or a deanery, however, journalism of that type can hardly be regarded as paying by men of the type necessary to the writing of it. A. A. B. is happily still with us, but Charles Masterman is not, and a new generation of "free lances" is to seek. The lances of the younger journalists are seldom free; and when they are, they are only too often blunt. This, much more than the iniquity of publishers who refuse their advertisements, is the cause of the declining influence of the weeklies in particular.

D. J.

Notes from Paris

By George Adam

The Electors.—It used to be an accepted fact that French people took no interest in their internal politics, but with nearly four thousand candidates trying to get returned to the Chamber of Deputies a change must be admitted to have taken place. This horde of would-be legislators turns an already confused electoral situation into chaos. They represent every shade of political opinion, and range in character from the sublime to the ridiculous. Most of them have wisely given themselves a Poincaré coupon, and whatever the eventual results may be, the surface returns naturally indicate a Poincaré majority. How many of those radicals who have come in under the Poincaré umbrella will remain under its shade when they have got out of the electoral rain into the Chamber is a question exercising many minds. It can only be answered when the new Chamber begins to find its feet and the "old hands" start the old game of creating a majority with which to carry on the Government.

Foreign Policy. — In any case there is one thing reasonably clear. Whatever the internal effects of the elections may be—and personally I believe that M. Poincaré's work will be carried on—there is not much likelihood of any change in foreign policy. The country will continue to preach the brotherhood of man, but will also keep its powder dry and, while working for general disarmament and "the outlawry of war," will insist upon the other fellow being the first to disarm and upon her right to maintain existing defensive alliances.

M. Briand has been lured by Washington into rather an unfortunate position, from which he is trying to extricate himself with his customary skill.

It really seems to be rather superfluous to summon an

International Conference at this stage in the world's history solely for the pleasure of hearing a number of rather bored diplomats blandly declaring that they don't like war and will only fight when there is no other course open to them. This is "cautious Nelly's" great contribution to world peace, and Paris fails to share whatever enthusiasm the idea may have caused in Great Britain. It is felt here that it is high time for European, and, may it be said, in particular British diplomacy, to abandon its "pussyfoot" methods in dealing with Washington. Americans themselves would be the first to admit that "big business," whether national or individual, cannot usefully be handled in the atmosphere of a college debating society. Despite the unquestioned economic domination of America, it is sometimes thought here that Washington might profit by not trying to teach her grandmaternal parent to suck eggs, and especially by not doing so in the cloying accents of Dr. Cadman's daily counsels.

It seems unfortunate that negotiations which at the outset were designed to ensure permanent peace between the United States and France (which is never likely to be endangered) now seem calculated to become a sore point between the two countries and to revive the old American idea that France is a bellicose and militarist country seeking whom she may devour.

Plagiarism and Pugilism.—It is almost refreshing to turn from these pacifist topics to the real war being waged in the lively pages of the *Mercure de France*. War, which even Mr. Kellogg might admit to be "aggressive," has been declared upon André Maurois, the author of "Colonel Bramble," "Ariel," and a "Life of Disraeli." He is roundly accused of having done nothing but plagiarize from Monypenny and Buckle with regard to Disraeli, and Dowden with regard to "Ariel" Shelley. In his "English Studies" he is accused of having pillaged Mr. Frank Harris for Oscar Wilde, and Gissing for Dickens. With the help of the Littré Dictionary, Maurois is more or less politely described as a thief and a two-footed jay, and held up to the execration of all scholars and writers. Mr. Frank Harris, like an old war-horse, has scented the

battle from afar and has rushed from Provence into print of engaging frankness to uphold his exclusive copyright in all the funny things Oscar Wilde said and probably also some of those he did not say. The attacking forces fill the *Mercure* with deadly parallels "awfully arrayed" between the works of Maurois, Buckle, Frank Harris, and Dowden. André Maurois, with a serenity that does him credit, gives a list of other authorities whom he has consulted at the British Museum, and offers to produce his book slips from the Reading-room as evidence that his work is that of a conscientious student, and not of a vulgar plagiarist. I confess that my admiration of Maurois is increased by the thought that after consulting so many dull authorities he should still have been able to give us such fresh and charming pictures of Shelley and Disraeli.

After all, it is one of the triumphs of our curious age that it has made even biographies of interest to the general reader.

Liberalism's Epitaph

By Austin Hopkinson, M.P.

LIBERALISM may fairly be defined as the belief that men and women know what they want better than do Government officials, that the play of free competition is the only satisfactory method of deciding the course of industrial development in the nation, and that democratic political institutions cannot be preserved unless the activities of the State are strictly limited. Liberals realize that if the State is to make itself responsible for the economic welfare of individual citizens, it can only do so by making them its slaves. For a pauper State is always, in the nature of things, a slave State. In short, Liberalism is a creed based economically upon the principle of Free Trade, and politically upon that of democratic liberty.

But, twenty-two years ago, the Liberal Party began to repudiate Liberalism, and the recently published report of the Liberal Industrial Inquiry* marks the final recantation of Liberal principles by that Party. In this report, after a hypocritical advocacy of free imports—which would be impossible if some of the other recommendations were to be adopted—and after a few undignified wriggles, the once respected and respectable Liberal Party throws aside all pretence of Liberalism, and announces to the world that it has sold itself to the compiler of the personal fund. For the future no question of Liberal principles is to be allowed to stand in the way of a return to place, power, and patronage.

The reader must, however, note that "Britain's Industrial Future" contains a vast amount of carefully collected material which is clearly tabulated and admirably arranged. It is, indeed, a valuable storehouse of information for those who take an active part in public life, and it is obvious that much conscientious effort must have been expended in its compilation. The facts

* "Britain's Industrial Future." Benn. 2s. 6d.

which it presents to the reader will well repay earnest study, and will give to those who are familiar with the conditions prevailing in various industries a view of those conditions which, though not new, is in a considerable degree detailed and accurate. So long as its authors are dealing with statistics they are on safe and familiar grounds. Dull they most certainly are, but their contributions to our store of knowledge are undoubtedly useful. But when they turn from dealing with things and begin to deal with men and women, the reader wonders whether they have ever seen a human being. Their book then becomes a dissertation on gastronomy from the point of view of those who have no stomachs. They appear to believe that Englishmen can be pulled hither, pushed thither, drilled and regimented, forbidden to do this, compelled to do that, and directed by officials from the cradle to the grave; and that they will accept this ordering of their lives as meekly as if they were German civilians in the days before the war.

It is this uncompromising denial of freedom, particularly in industrial relations, to the individual citizen which makes the reader marvel at the effrontery of the authors when they call themselves "Liberals" and "Free Traders." Let us take one or two examples of the recommendations for the abolition of Free Trade advocated by these "Liberals." In the chapter entitled "A Programme of National Development," we are told that "the only sound way of dealing with unemployment is vigorous (State) action to *redress the balance* of our national economic life." In other words, people must not have what they want, but what some Government department thinks that they ought to have. A Committee of National Development, assisted by a Board of National Investment, is to prevent human effort and capital resources from being used in the production of things which people desire to have, and to ensure that they shall have those things which the Board and the Committee think that people ought to desire. Surely this, limitation of the choice of the individual citizen could be effected more easily by a drastic tariff on imports?

Lest some fragments of freedom might escape the clutches of the Development Committee and the Invest-

ment Board, we are also to have "as an essential instrument of better and wiser government in modern conditions," an Economic General Staff which is "to engage in continuous study," to "call the attention of the Cabinet to important tendencies," and to "suggest to the Government plans for solving fundamental economic difficulties." It is possible that the reader will remember that we had a body of approximately the same kind some ten years ago, and that it was responsible for suggesting the greater part of the absurd legislation of Coalition days. Imagine the general staff dealing with the existing situation in the coal export trade, and "suggesting to the Government" legislation designed to regain the Scandinavian market in the face of subsidized Polish competition, or "co-ordinating statistical information" as to the condition of the cotton trade, and "calling the attention of the Cabinet to the tendency" of cotton-spinning companies to go into bankruptcy!

One of the first recommendations which the general staff would have to make would undoubtedly be a very stiff import tariff to meet the situation created in many industries by the innumerable Trade Boards which are to be established, and are to fix minimum wages "which will be felt to be just"—presumably by the recipients. Would the present minimum wage for miners in Durham and Northumberland be "felt to be just"? And, if that minimum is raised to an amount which fulfils that condition, how many miners will have to go without any wage at all? The men in those districts have decided that they prefer low wages to no wages. But such a choice ought not to be allowed in the opinion of our "Liberal" apostles of liberty. For a Trade Board is to be set up in order to deny them the right to accept wages which are not "felt to be just." Presumably, however, in such a crisis the economic general staff comes into action with a "plan for solving" this "fundamental economic difficulty"; and that plan, if it is to be of any use at all, would be the sending of a fleet to blockade Danzig, since that is really the only help that the Government could render.

We have already had some little experience of the folly of endeavouring to fix wages in accordance with

Trade Board principles of abstract justice. Our farmers in many districts have found that the proceeds of their industry are insufficient to pay the legal minimum wage, and land goes out of cultivation. How could the "general staff" help them? By a subsidy or a tariff, and in no other way; unless, of course, the State—as is proposed in another part of the report—undertakes to run the industry itself and to make up the deficit by contributions wrung from the workers in other industries. For that is really all that the Liberal agricultural policy amounts to. The State is to take over the agricultural land and is to eject those tenant farmers whose methods of farming do not meet with the approval of sundry committees. Credit is to be granted or refused according to whether or not the tenant farms his land in the way the committee tells him to farm it. That is to say, the State undertakes to run the agricultural industry and the farmer merely becomes a subordinate deprived of any power to make decisions. Naturally, in these conditions, the State would be obliged to meet the losses incurred.

From end to end of the book there constantly crops up this bitter hatred of liberty, particularly of economic and industrial liberty, and it is on this account that I have termed it "Liberalism's Epitaph." For it is obvious that, so far as the Liberal Party is concerned, Liberalism is as dead as mutton, and those who still believe that liberty, with all its disadvantages, is worth having are turning to the Conservative Party, which, if it would abandon its policy of deciding by State action in the form of tariffs which industries are to be killed and which are to be artificially stimulated, would be able to go forward as the one defender of that liberty which Socialists and Lloyd-Georgian "Liberals" are itching to destroy. Let it be admitted that theoretically there is much to be said for the slave State which the Liberal Party wishes to set up. Yet, however desirable in theory, its realization is impossible in practice. For our people have fought so hard for freedom that they will refuse to surrender it when once they perceive what is in the wind. The list of names, printed at the beginning of the Liberal Report, is significant. Nearly all the persons forming the committees which prepared the report are people who revel

in statistics and theories. They are, if I may use the phrase without offence, people without stomachs—that is to say, people who live in a world into which realities seldom penetrate, a world where logic reigns supreme and men act invariably as theorists would have them act.

The chapter entitled "Reform of the National Accounts" shows clearly how considerations excellent in theory may with advantage be set aside in practice. The authors point out, quite correctly, that the form in which the Budget is presented renders it impossible for the House of Commons to control expenditure. But they fail to perceive what disastrous results would follow a "reform" which surrendered the national finances to the tender mercies of a democratically elected assembly. They sum up their objections to the present system by stating that it tends "to increase the extent to which the published Budget results can be rigged." Yet a little practical experience of these matters would have shown them that one of our chief safeguards against wild finance is to be found in a system of accounting which enables the Treasury to fool the House of Commons. For the latter body depends, under modern conditions, upon mass bribery for its very existence (surely a party led by Mr. Lloyd George appreciates this point). It does not want to control finance. It wants to vote away money—which is not at all the same thing.

For a number of years I have controlled the finances of a local authority. Ours is a poor district, grievously burdened by unemployment. Yet, even in times of the worst trade depression, the elected council gives itself up with enthusiasm to the invention of ingenious new ways of spending money. I venture to say that it is one of the most sensible councils in the country. But the popular vote demands a popular policy. And a popular policy is invariably one which demands unnecessary expenditure. Fortunately, however, the method of drawing up the accounts, which is imposed upon us by the Ministry of Health, and is in essentials similar to that employed by the Treasury, so entirely conceals the facts and affords such scope for culinary operations that I have been able to present annual budgets of a profoundly gloomy aspect, while drastically reducing the rates year

after year, liquidating a heavy debt, and establishing our finances on a thoroughly sound basis.

Pedantic theorists, confronted with such iniquity, may lift shocked hands. But, when all is said and done, the present system works. It enables the unenterprising but essentially sound economists at the Treasury to circumvent the economic lunacy of the House of Commons, and many of us in the House are deeply grateful for the existence of a method of accounting by which surplus assets may be hidden from the sight of some of our fellow-members. Let us hold tight to the gold standard (in despite of Sir Josiah Stamp and Mr. Keynes) in order to prevent Chancellors of the Exchequer from cooking their accounts in such a way as to show a false prosperity. But let us give them every possible opportunity for showing a false poverty, and for thus guarding national nest-eggs from the greedy grasp of the House of Commons. As long as the vast majority of the electorate is unaware that it is paying the taxes (as it undoubtedly does, even when they are called "Super-tax" or "Death Duties"), so long is it essential that the national accounts shall be cooked, lest ruin overtake the people. Every experienced industrialist knows that public companies must accumulate hidden reserves in order to prevent the ordinary shareholders from bleeding them to death. Yet the shareholders' desire for dividends is but a small thing when it is compared with democracy's desire for doles. The more universal the shout of "Ninepence for fourpence," the more necessary is it that the people shall not have it. The more deliberately the Lloyd-Georgian "Liberals" strive to humbug the voters into economic damnation, the more earnestly must we strive to cheat them into economic salvation.

The fixed determination of the authors never to face realities is again shown in the chapter headed "The Burden of National Taxation." In this section they endeavour to prove that the only way of lightening that burden is to reduce our defence force. Already our expert advisers unanimously inform us that our armed forces are, at the best, barely adequate to afford a reasonable degree of protection against aggression from overseas. Any appreciable reduction would, therefore, render

them entirely useless, and the decreased expenditure would represent money simply thrown away. If your fire insurance premium is £10 a year, and if you refuse to pay more than £9, you might with equal safety keep the latter sum in your pocket. Again, if the extreme protectionists gained the upper hand, making our island entirely self-supporting and completely independent of food supplies from abroad, we might safely reduce our navy and let the Empire fall to pieces. But when "Free Traders" advocate a weak navy, they are guilty either of excessive stupidity or gross hypocrisy—in the present instance probably the latter. A policy of free food imports is national suicide for an island people in the absence of a navy powerful enough to ensure the freedom of the seas for our mercantile marine. The actions of all the nations of the world in the period since the war have rendered it perfectly obvious that not one of them would hesitate for one moment to starve us into subjection, if the power were great enough effectually to second the will. It is useless, therefore, to whine because we have to go without a few luxuries in order to pay for our national safety, and to say with the authors of the report: "If we are to shoulder this burden in perpetuity, it means that, so far as the burden of armaments is concerned, the war was fought in vain." Do they really think that we who, during the war, suffered all that we could suffer in mind, body, and estate, did so in order that our descendants might henceforward go on from generation to generation growing fatter and fatter?

The next chapter, "Reform of the Rating System," brings us back once more to the dear old fallacies of Henry George. The Liberal Party learns nothing and forgets nothing. After our experience of increment value duties, it is strange to meet with such a sentence as this: "The value of the site results mainly from the presence and activity of the community, and is therefore a peculiarly suitable subject for taxation." Have those who wrote that sentence never discovered the fact that the value of everything depends upon the presence and activity of the community? Have they never understood that taxes are paid by persons, not by things? It does not console the wretched victim to call his rates

"taxation of site values." He has to pay them, whatever they may be called, either directly or indirectly, through higher ground rents, and it is sheer humbug to represent to him that some ingenious change in the nominal method of assessment will throw the burden upon the shoulders of someone else.

With this return to Henry George the report appropriately terminates. It represents, as I have already said, a vast amount of painstaking effort on the part of men and women who are profoundly earnest and profoundly dull, who are completely out of touch with the thoughts and aspirations of the great majority of their fellow-citizens, and whose conscientious labour is almost entirely wasted. For their work is vitiated by the additions to the report which have been rendered necessary in order that it may help to obtain votes for Liberal Parliamentary candidates. Again and again valuable evidence, brought forward in great detail and with great labour, is not allowed to fulfil its natural function of disproving the fallacies of Lloyd-Georgism. It has to be bent and turned this way and that, and its obvious bearing has to be falsified, in order that specious bribes may be dangled before the eyes of the electorate. In short, "Britain's Industrial Future" is a perfect example of the way in which truth may be—

Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools.

The question which occurs to the reader as he closes the book is this: Is the nation so forgetful that it will allow itself once again to be humbugged by the arch-charlatan?

Safeguarding Iron and Steel

By Reginald Clarry, M.P.

It will not be denied that, if we are to continue as an industrial nation, the maintenance of our iron and steel industries in a state of competitive efficiency is not only of the utmost importance, but a vital necessity.

What is the position of these industries today?

During the period of the war plants were modernized and increased in capacity from 8 to 13 million tons a year; the production last year was 9,100,000 tons, which includes material produced in the early months of the year, to overtake the shortage due to the 1926 coal stoppage. Our present production is not representative of the general increase in world demand in which we are not taking our place.

Our imports of iron and steel have steadily increased, whilst exports have decreased; last year, for the first time in our industrial history, our imports (4,406,000 tons) exceeded exports (4,200,000 tons) by 206,000 tons.

These growing imports represent the energy of a Continental Steel Cartel, which allocates quota and subsidizes exports; consequently, the quotations for foreign products in England are generally lower than the selling price in the country of origin.

This cartel could not operate successfully if this country did not exist as a free and open dump for excess Continental mass production—which is not haphazard and surplus, but is a cold, calculated method to close down our heavy products and systematically to capture our finished and semi-finished markets.

The disadvantages under which our home producers labour in comparison with the Continent are:

Higher capital charges.
Higher wages.
Shorter hours of labour.
Difference between internal and external foreign exchanges.
Higher taxation—largely owing to our National Debt.
Higher burden of rates and social services.
(These two latter items in themselves account for at least 6s. per ton increase over our pre-war figures.)
Higher freight charges.

This last item bears very heavily on the steel industry as, from production to port of shipment, a ton of steel requires transport for upwards of 7 tons of material, and it has been estimated that transport charges represent

approximately 20 per cent. of the selling price of the finished steel.

There is no need to point out the considerable advantages foreign manufacturers have in freight and transport charges over corresponding service in this country.

The increased charges to the British producer detailed in the foregoing items are obviously beyond the control of the industry itself, but let those who throw doubts on the high standard of efficiency, or the efforts of the industry to extricate itself from the overwhelming mass of adverse conditions enumerated, consider the undeniable facts of the situation.

Taking 1913 as the basis and the cost of all commodities at 100, we find that whereas in January 1928 the Board of Trade wholesale price figure for all commodities was 141·1, the corresponding figure for iron and steel was only 112·9. In other words, as an industry, it has shown itself willing to fight the commercial battle to the utmost of its power and resources. In South Wales the present prices for tin plate bars are round about 115s. per ton, in comparison with 104s. per ton before the war. An amazing tribute to efforts for efficiency and low prices.

Turning to the dividend side, we find that, according to the *Times Financial Supplement*, the thirty representative coal, iron and steel companies which they have taken for review show an average loss of 2·7 per cent. This figure is not claimed as completely representative, but in any event it is sinister enough. It should be added that a comparison of the Stock Exchange quotations for the big American combine, The United States Steel Corporation, which stands at an enormous premium, and the United Steel Company in this country makes very depressing reading.

Suggestions have been made from time to time that the industry should right itself by co-operative selling—scrapping of obsolete plant—financial reconstructions and amalgamations. These proposals are, of course, not new or original, and will doubtless be developed by the industry to a further extent, if it survives and is brought to a more healthy and normal condition.

A period of rest from cut-throat competition, a chance to increase capacity of works and plant, and fresh capital

are required—who would invest new money in the industry under existing conditions? *Further and permanent contraction is the only alternative to safeguarding—which in itself is a sound business remedy. Why wait a day longer when we must come to it sooner or later?*

From information at my disposal, the industry is merely desirous that a small duty should be placed on iron and steel imports, the amount of which would at least make the foreign producer contribute towards the extra cost the home manufacturer has to bear, thereby restricting those foreign imports, though not of necessity prohibiting them.

It is suggested that with the assurance of a greater and continuous production British selling costs could be further reduced; the economies obtained by an 80 per cent. works or plant output over a 60 per cent. or less output are obvious. The home consumer of the semi-finished and finished products would not necessarily be required to pay higher prices and should undoubtedly receive indirect advantages from the stabilizing of a great basic industry.

Let us assume that such a duty is in operation, and the effect has been to restrict foreign imports to very nearly half their present level; and that, in consequence, an additional 2,000,000 tons of steel would be produced at home. The effect of this additional 2,000,000 tons of British production would be to employ:

30,000 steel workers
30,000 miners (6 million tons coal)

60,000 additional men

60,000 men would be earning wages instead of being a charge on public funds, which at £70 per man (Government estimate) equals over £4,000,000. This relief would be felt by every ratepayer and taxpayer in the country.

The revenue from the duty, on the assumed balance of present rates of imports, could be allocated to swell this relief or, alternatively, to assist exports or reduce rates payable by steel works, if found desirable. The assistance to transport and the freer circulation of money would all be favourable to the general community.

The effect on the coal-mining industry is also very important. Although some controversy has taken place

as to the consumption of coal in the production of a ton of steel, the differences of opinion have arisen merely owing to the various stages and qualities of steel upon which the coal has been calculated; but if total production figures are divided into total coal consumption, we find that approximately three tons of coal are consumed in the production of one ton of average steel. *What a boon it would be for the coal industry at the present time to have an additional demand from steel manufacturers consequent upon an additional production of* 2,000,000 *tons of steel in this country.*

Now let us turn to the most talked-of objections. It is assumed that prices of semi-finished iron and steel would go up, and that as in their various stages these are the raw materials of the finished product, the manufacturers would be put out of business. Again it is said that it is only the purchase of cheap foreign material that enables certain consumers of semi-finished steel to compete for export.

The easiest illustration of this is the re-roller, who uses steel blooms, billets, or slabs for the purpose of rolling into bars, wire rods, strip, etc.

At one time there may have been something in this contention, and the use of cheaper foreign material to produce greater profits was doubtless an attractive proposition; but the determined pressure of attack on the re-rollers' finished markets has swept like an icy blast through this fools' paradise. And for what reason? It is just this. A few years ago the foreign importer was quite prepared to sell his raw material at a price which permitted our re-rollers to sell their products on a margin of profit which was sufficiently tempting. But as time has gone on, they have penetrated into the finished market to such an extent that the re-rollers' margin for working and profit is fast disappearing, and in consequence the re-rollers, complacent enough when things were favourable, are now finding that, even with the aid of so-called cheap steel, they in turn are being forced to close down their plants.

This severe penetration into our manufactures need not necessarily stop at the re-rollers' product, but with a permanently crippled home production of heavy raw

material, certain engineering products and British shipbuilding itself will be at the mercy of the foreigner. Why should he be content to supply our shipbuilders with their plates when by a stroke of the pen he can raise the quotation for these plates and at the same time build his own ships ?

Little wonder that big re-rollers are now practically unanimous for safeguarding the steel industry.

We have heard *ad nauseam* that cheap foreign steel was essential to maintain our exports of finished products; but has this flood of imports shown a corresponding increase in our exports ? When we turn to the figures, we find that although, year by year, there is an added increase in imports, our exports, contrary to expectations, have steadily decreased. *So much for this short-sighted argument which does not take into consideration other factors : principally the one that we no longer dominate the world in the manufacture of steel products, whatever we may have done twenty-five years ago.*

Those people in this country (whether interested in industry or not) who, knowing the facts, are still antagonistic to this natural precaution for industrial self-preservation, must be either blinded by political prejudice, or directly interested in the importation and sale of foreign steel products as merchants.

The opposition of merchants is understandable; a man cannot be blamed for considering his own position, but it is hardly necessary to point out that as a nation we do not — and cannot — exist by the merchants' activities. Indeed, it is obvious that the standard of our existence rests—and must be measured—by our industrial activities and prosperity. If the test of good government be to secure the greatest good for the greatest number, the objections from these quarters break down — *the law of self-preservation equally applies to the great majority.* Some again are not interested in the importation of steel and iron products, but are prejudiced against safeguarding because of real or fancied fears, consequent upon protection of the home market, which in their minds outweigh the facts of the serious position the industry and the country are faced with. This kind of objection rests entirely on the assumption that the effect of safeguarding would increase the prices paid by

consumers. There is no evidence that this should be the result. The industries which are already safeguarded show reduced imports, increased exports, increased employment, no extra prices to consumers, and a substantial revenue; an amazing collection of advantages from actual experience.

But even supposing for a moment that safeguarding in the iron and steel industry resulted in an increase in the price of steel to the consuming industries (which is not, of course, admitted), let us then examine the effect of such an increase to various consumers. For instance, the value of exported engineering products, according to the Board of Trade returns, is approximately £100 per ton. Even if the whole of the machinery exported was steel, a rise, therefore, of as much as £1 per ton in the price of steel would not involve an increase of more than 1 per cent. in the price of the engineering product. As a second example, we will take agricultural implements. On one costing about £15, even a 2 per cent. increase in cost only makes the implement £15 6s. On the same basis, domestic iron or steel utensils, such as a large kettle obtainable at 7s. 6d., would bear an increased cost to the housewife of under 2d. So, if the worst fears of the opponents of safeguarding were justified, the increased costs, in these examples themselves infinitesimal, would probably not be passed on at all, as the slight cost would be far outweighed by the general advantages of industrial revival in at least two great basic industries.

The iron and steel industry has a very definite conception of the only way in which its future prosperity can be permanently established: unless any measure of safeguarding which may be introduced enables them *to reduce still further the cost of production it can be of no real value to the industry.*

From a national standpoint the continuance of free and unrestricted imports of cheap steel, so far from being beneficial to this country, represents a definite net loss. For if we take 33 tons of steel as representing the continuous employment of one man for a year, we find that with a so-called advantage of £1 per ton in foreign steel the country has to bear the cost of keeping an unemployed

man and his family from starvation. To reduce the matter to a simple subtraction sum :

National cost per man unemployed	£70
Advantage in importing 33 tons @ £1	£33
National loss on each 33 tons imported ..	£37

The attitude of organized labour within the steel industry itself towards safeguarding is difficult to understand. Certain trade union leaders propose to prohibit imports of steel into this country which have not been produced under conditions regarded as satisfactory by British trade unionists. While few would object to this alternative, such a measure, owing to the amount of investigation involved, would lead to endless friction and is entirely impracticable. Trade unions protect their members as regards conditions, hours and wages, and it is surely only reasonable that they should protect the continuity of work. I believe the workers themselves are entirely in favour of their jobs being safeguarded, and it is undoubtedly political prejudice that prevents a definite acceptance of the principle.

The danger of reliance on foreign steel has been stressed in relation to industry in peace time; but what would be our *position in time of war? Steel is as essential as personnel; a crippled steel industry involves a crippled army and navy, and we should be facing an aggressive world without adequate means of self-defence.*

For seven years the industry has carried on the struggle, and it has not been confined to the employers, for the workers, too, have played their part, and played it valiantly. The agreements into which they have, from time to time, entered have been honourably kept, although it has meant a steady decline in standards of living—a decline affecting some of the very cream of British labour.

On the employers' side the demand has become practically unanimous because, as time has gone on, the real gravity of the situation has steadily emerged.

The more thoughtful units of the general public who, like myself, have no direct connection with the iron and steel industry, are beginning to look beyond the plight of the industry itself—to regard this question and its solution as one which goes to the very foundation of our national safety. our industrial prosperity and existence as a great Empire.

The New Egypt?

By "Memnon"

By the end of April the torrid blasts of the Khamsin wind, together with the approach of the summer solstice, have driven away from the Nile Valley the last remnants of the rearguard of tourists and winter visitors. These have returned to their homes, taking with them mixed impressions of the country, its history, and people.

The tourist, like his predecessor, Herodotus, finds much in the tales of the dragoman or guide that he deems to be incredible. Like Herodotus, too, he will remark on the topsy-turvydom of everything, and how ordinary processes, such as sawing wood, weaving, etc., are done in the reverse way to the normal Occidental practice.

The system of government, the want of system, or the multiplicity of systems alike, will have puzzled him; he may have formed views of his own, or, have had those of others impressed upon him; but even so, he cannot fail to be struck by the peculiar character of the Government machine.

Together with the departure of the winter migrants, the exodus of ministers and the great ones of Egyptian official and business life is also impending. Ramleh, Ras el Bar, Alexandria, and Damietta prepare for a goodly proportion of these, who, attracted by the more equable climatic conditions, the presence of the Court, and the sea-bathing, spend a cooler and pleasanter existence than in Cairo.

Not a few go farther afield. The presence of pashas, beys, and prosperous merchants upon the Paris boulevards, in Swiss and Continental pleasure resorts and *cures d'eaux* is too common a summer phenomenon to call for particular comment. Transactions upon the Bourse are mostly slack. The bulk of last year's cotton crop has been sold; and, except for the toil of a laborious peasantry whose energies are devoted to catch-cropping

and the care of the young cotton plants, there is very little doing.

In fact, until about September, it is a *saison morte* in Egypt. This being so, it appears a not unsuitable moment to review dispassionately the Egyptian situation. It is desperately tangled. Truth to tell, it has never been anything else for the last fifty years or more. To begin with, there was the anomalous subordination of the Khedival regime to Turkish suzerainty, even though the exercise of sovereign rights by the Padishah was more theoretical than practical, and, in fact, confined to the payment of an annual tribute, the drilling of the Egyptian Army in Turkish, the close control of the tobacco *régie* and the issue of occasional firmans authorizing appointments.

Next came the financial muddle. Ismail Pasha was unquestionably a man of big intellect and even of administrative, though misplaced, genius; but thanks to a species of megalomania, thanks, too, to an entourage largely formed of adventurers who exploited their victim, bleeding him and Egypt white in the process, he landed his country in unparalleled financial disorder.

Thanks to Ismail the Suez Canal was constructed, whereupon Egypt, a country that till that period had merely been a land of remarkable fertility and of great historical interest by reason of its monuments and antiquity, became, by the geographical accident of the canal, no longer an agricultural State, but the main ganglion upon the waterways and trade between West and East. The acquisition of the Khedive Ismail's shares in this waterway by the British Government is ancient history. Yet it is inevitable that to the pre-eminent maritime power the possession of this holding has been of inestimable value, and furnishes a natural explanation of the identity of interest alike shared by Egypt and Great Britain in the Suez Canal.

The revolt of Arabi Pasha aimed primarily at the Turkish elements controlling Egypt and her affairs; shortly afterwards came the divided counsels of the French, the bombardment of Alexandria and French abstention therefrom. The battles of Tel-el-Kebir, Kassassin, and the occupation of Cairo, the settlement on his throne of

the Khedive Tewfik, and the beginning of the British occupation, which, as Lord Lansdowne and others declared, was to be of a temporary character till such time as the Egyptians were ripe for self-government, followed in rapid succession.

Everything was in chaos: finance, administration, public works, education, sanitation, and justice were a minus quantity. Foreign-protected subjects under the ægis of the capitulations enjoyed remarkable immunities. Everywhere, where plain sailing might have been hoped for, Lord Cromer and his collaborators found rough water.

The Mahdist revolt in the Sudan aggravated an almost intolerable situation. But, in spite of it all, by slow degrees a measure of order was evolved out of chaos, solvency out of bankruptcy, reasonably sound administration out of ineptitude and the grossest corruption. Not only this, but the irreconcilable hostility of the French to the British occupation—thanks to the tactful and conciliatory methods of the Consul-General, supported and carried through by the late King Edward—was tranquillized, finding final expression in the sealing of the *Entente Cordiale* between the two Powers. I now come to what may be described as the second period; but before dealing with this, it may be advisable to touch lightly on Egypt, its people, and general characteristics.

Allusion has been made to the chaotic condition of affairs. This applies with equal force to the peoples of Egypt. The great cities of Cairo and Alexandria are intensely cosmopolitan. There you will find a choice blend of European, Asiatic, and African with the races of the Mediterranean littoral predominating. The King and the descendants of Mohammed Ali, his uncles and cousins are mostly of Turco-Albanian origin. Amongst the ministers and under-secretaries few, save those of the Coptic faith, are of unmixed Egyptian origin; the officials also are of diverse nationality—Egyptian, Syrian, Jewish, Armenian, and mixed European.

It is the same in business circles; they are cosmopolitan to the *n*th degree. The artisans and labouring classes also comprise a perfect salad of nationalities. The majority are Egyptian, yet drawn from different parts of

the country, talking slightly different dialects, possessing widely different temperaments and ideals.

The Berberin from Nubia, the native of the Delta, the Copt from Upper Egypt, the desert Bedouin who has made his home in the city, the Saïdi from, say, Assiut—all are as temperamentally distinct as are an Aberdeenshire shepherd, a Somerset farm hand, and a Cockney corner-boy.

It is therefore obvious that to form judgments on Egypt and Egyptian affairs, based on a knowledge of the cities alone, is a process fraught with some risk of inaccuracy.

It is a truism to remark that fundamentally the fortunes or misfortunes of Egypt depend upon the prosperity of its agriculture, with which is linked the fortune, good or bad, of its *fellaheen* or peasantry. As an important trade junction on the main route to or from the Far East, and as a winter tourist and health resort, it possesses advantages denied to many other countries that lie off the main road and cannot boast such a store of interesting historical monuments or such a winter climate. But these are secondary matters.

Local industrial enterprise is, and can be at best, but a small affair. Prosperous and contented agriculture is everything. In this connection it is only just to the Egyptian Government to recognize that they have been, to some extent at least, alive to this circumstance and have engaged the services of the two chief experts in cotton hybridization to advise on seed selection, etc. It is also pertinent to remark that the agricultural estates of large cultivators, such as King Fuad and Prince Omar Toussoun—to mention two—are models of scientific farming and efficient production.

What, then, is the trouble? To begin with, the *fellaheen* are not over-contented. The labourer, though his wants are simple and few, whose toil is heavy, finds his wages very low and the cost of the necessaries of life unduly high. The small-holder, though he may receive a good price for his cotton crop, finds it harder, much harder, to live than he did, say, when Lord Cromer or Lord Kitchener occupied the Cairo residency.

In those days even, the indigenous *muhandiz*, or

irrigation engineer, used, when he saw the opportunity, to claim an additional reward for supplying water to the parched crops.

If his demands were too exacting, the aggrieved cultivator would address a petition to the British Agency. Inquiry then followed. The dominant position of the British representative has changed, so that nowadays the *fellah* has to pay or get little or no water. If he likes to write a petition, he can still do so, but at every stage thereof he has to disgorge hard-won piastres to further his appeal, and, at the end of it all, may discover that the other side has paid more than he, so that his petition fails. In the same way I hear dark rumours that in cases of agrarian outrage, destruction of crops, etc., supposing that the offender be caught, justice is vouchsafed to the highest bidder, not necessarily to the man with the just grievance. Whilst it is true to say that the system of commissions and bribes is ingrained in the Oriental mind, it is equally true to add that this sort of thing does not contribute to national contentment or efficiency.

There is no doubt that during the war many *omdehs*, or village headmen, and other persons occupying posts of administrative responsibility reaped a big harvest and gratified much private revenge by recruiting persons for the Labour Corps and blackmailing them if they desired to purchase exemption.

In some villages the appeals for the Red Crescent fund were described as a compulsory levy on the village, whereof the *omdeh* and his associates took a moiety for their enrichment. Commandeering of crops and payment therefor were often on similar lines. Is there any reason for wonder, then, that in 1919 riots and murders occurred, thanks to the uninterrupted propaganda of Nationalist factions under the leadership of Saad Zaghlul and others?

The country, as a whole, had grievances, not a few of them due to the action of Egyptian Nationals, but all of them laid at the doors of the English.

The personal equation in the East is all-important. During the regime of Lord Cromer, so long as he received the whole-hearted support of the Home Government, all was smooth enough. He may have been arbitrary;

he may have been, and was, brusque in his manner; but all recognized his complete integrity and his overwhelming sense of justice.

As soon, however, as the Liberal Government of the day seemed to give him but half-hearted support, or no support at all, his position became difficult, if not impossible. He was succeeded by Sir Eldon Gorst, of whose brief regime it is sufficient to say that the mortal disease from which he was suffering never gave him a chance. Then came Lord Kitchener, whose overwhelming personality and knowledge of Egypt, its people and language, placed him in a class apart. Then the war. The brief regime of Sir Henry MacMahon was followed by Sir Reginald Wingate, whose advice, had it been taken, would assuredly have saved much of the subsequent heart-burning and trouble. Then the Alexandria riots, and the subsequent appointment of Lord Allenby, and the Milner Mission.

To take the latter episode first, the Milner Mission dispatched by Mr. Lloyd George was given terms of reference "to inquire and report." Whether the then Prime Minister gave his own private instructions we know not. But we do know that the form of inquiry and report took the shape of a draft treaty! Whereas nothing was mentioned in the terms of reference in regard to the Sudan, the Mission sent two of its members to Khartoum and included unasked-for recommendations regarding the Sudan in its report.

Lord Allenby, who as a soldier and leader had gained a great military reputation, when confronted with the tangled administration and diplomatic problems of his office, found much to learn. Whether his soldierly mind penetrated the subtleties of Oriental thought and reasoning may possibly be doubted. Whether his local advisers showed judgment in the advice they tendered or his lordship displayed discrimination in his selection of advisers is an open question. Anyhow, except for the outrageous assassination of Sir Lee Stack that took place during his tenure of office, when Lord Allenby showed commendable firmness (the 1922 declaration resulting), and the ultimate trial of accused persons, the acquittal of whom led to the resignation of the late Judge Kershaw, to the outward eye at least he showed no firmness at

all. Lord Allenby's regime evinced little of outstanding interest, though in justice it should be added that he stood out for fair terms for Englishmen retiring from the Egyptian service. Lord Allenby's successor, Lord Lloyd, is cast in a different mould. He has had a long school of training in the Orient and linguistically and temperamentally he is well equipped for his difficult task. He has a vigorous personality coupled with sufficient vivacity to ensure a modicum of friendship where the bluntness of Lord Cromer might have created a stand-off atmosphere. He talks the language—knows the people.

Consequently, when the white paper containing the correspondence between the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Sarwat Pasha was published, it was a matter of some comment that the scheme propounded did not contain an even qualified blessing on the part of Lord Lloyd. Presumably, his views were obtained—also those of Lord Plumer—in Palestine; as it must be borne in mind that events in Egypt have an instant repercussion over the border in the Holy Land.

One is forced to wonder whether their frank criticisms partook more of blessings or of curses.

Under the terms of the 1922 declaration, Great Britain, which is in Egypt largely owing to circumstances outside its own control, has made distinct and implicit declarations that have been accepted by foreign powers, on the subject of the four "reserved points."

From conversations with those on the spot, I gather that the rejection of the proposed treaty by the Wafd has caused a general feeling of relief—not only amongst the British community in Egypt, but Europeans generally. They say that the terms of the treaty left them with a feeling of indefinable insecurity, and that the vast amount of foreign capital invested in Egypt demands the guarantee of unimpaired British protection from internal and external aggression; that in the past, Egyptians who had shown themselves friendly to England and the English regime had been made to suffer by the so-called Nationalist elements, whilst little or nothing had been done to alleviate the hardship of their treatment at the hands of the official or unofficial Egyptian; that they feared the policy of concession and sweet reasonableness outlined

in the draft treaty would only be translated as another proof of the weakness of the English Government which, in this instance, appeared to have been instigated by what the French diplomats call *la situation nette* rather than a sense of the realities. They consider that the reserved points are definite.

If the Egyptian Government care to face them fairly and squarely, well and good. Otherwise, let the *status quo* remain. Materially, Egypt is extremely prosperous. Round Cairo new palaces are springing up like mushrooms. Evidences of wealth are everywhere. The Egyptian possesses more ample opportunity of self-government than is realized. The army of occupation has its barracks, but does not interfere with Egyptian life at all.

English officials, except in the police, have no executive authority whatsoever—and never had. It is accurate to say that in the past, if advice were given, and ignored, they possessed what was tantamount to executive authority. This certainly is not the case now.

Naturally, the school of thought that regards licence as identical with liberty objects to the English occupation, but this does not mean that the English occupation is the lesser of two evils.

In view of foreign investments, the departure of the English would merely mean the entrance of another European power, whom the Egyptian would be unable to prevent or hinder. It therefore seems pertinent to suggest that a period of tutelage is essential, during which it may be seen what sort of a job the Egyptians can make of the ample means of self-government they now possess.

The Liberal Government at Bay in Rumania

By Christopher Rawson

RUMANIA is in the process of struggling with a problem common to all those countries which the peace treaties constructed afresh out of unhomogeneous fragments of the map of Europe—that of finding the forms and methods of government best suited to it. Yugoslavia and, to a certain extent, Czechoslovakia are in similar case. In each of them the element which formed the nucleus for the new country—Rumanians of the Regat, Serbs in Yugoslavia, and Czechs in Czechoslovakia—has dominated the remainder by reason of its stronger organization and greater political experience, and has imposed on it an administration and economy according to its lights. In each case the remainder has chafed under this hegemony and demanded changes and adaptations to suit its condition and temperament. This antithesis of ideas leads to more or less violent internal disputes, but, as time goes on and the different elements tend to fuse, the struggle grows less and a system passably accommodated to the needs of the whole is gradually evolved.

In Rumania the process has been long delayed owing to the stubbornness with which the nucleus-element has held its ground. For eight years the representatives of the new provinces have been hammering away at a series of Governments led by the politicians of old Rumania, trying to get what they wanted without making the slightest impression. The Liberal Party, with the Bratianus at its head, has governed the country in its own way and has paid no attention to the complaints which reached Bucarest across the mountains from Transylvania, or from the plains of Bessarabia in the north. Now all of a sudden the situation is changed. King Ferdinand and Jonel Bratianu, the figurehead of the old regime, are dead; the Liberals, whose influence has been unchecked since the war, have neither the authority of the former nor the prestige of the latter to support them, and the campaign of the opposition has redoubled in strength. On Sunday, March 18, the National Peasants' Party summoned 50,000 of its members from all parts of the country to Bucarest to demand the resignation of the

Liberal Government, and the inhabitants of the capital welcomed them with visible sympathy. The Government itself took no notice of this demonstration of its unpopularity, but there is reason to believe that the Council of Regency was more susceptible, and that it is doing its best to prepare the way for the Liberals to retire without loss of face. If they do not, the opposition threatens to hold a still more formidable demonstration at Alba Julia in Transylvania on May 6. It is clear that the passing of the old regime cannot now be long delayed. The change-over, when it comes, will be of far-reaching importance for Rumania, for it will mean a break with the Byzantine methods and traditions which have prevailed there hitherto, and the setting up of new standards and healthier ideals.

The struggle which has lasted since the war between the Liberal Party, representing old Rumania, and the National Peasants' Party, which draws its strength from the new provinces, has been waged on a variety of questions, ranging from the methods of the administration and the conduct of elections to the succession to the throne. It has gradually come to be a fight between reactionary Conservatism on the one hand and reform and progress on the other. Curiously enough, the Liberal Party was itself the party of progress in old Rumania before the war, but its latest and most important reform, the distribution of land to the peasants and the introduction of manhood suffrage, brought about a complete change in its political orientation. The agrarian laws, by destroying the class of landed proprietors, practically annihilated the Conservative Party, which had been the regular opponent of the Liberals, and left the latter without any serious rival political organization; the only others in the field were the "one man" party of General Averescu, the National Party of Transylvania, a survival from the Hungarian Parliament, and the new Peasants' Party, which had been brought into being by the extension of the franchise. The two latter gradually took over the rôle of agitators for change and reform which had been sustained before the war by the Liberals, while the Liberals, by the policy which they adopted, fell back into the position of Conservatives and guardians of the existing regime.

The policy in question was the economic policy of

Vintila Bratianu. The name of Vintila Bratianu is not so well known as that of his elder brother, Jonel, but it is Vintila who has undoubtedly exercised the greater influence on the course of affairs in Rumania since the war. It was he who coined the phrase "ourselves by ourselves" as the solution for the problems of reconstruction with which Rumania was faced when the Germans evacuated the exhausted country. Rumania, he explained, must spend little and do everything for herself. Nature had been kind in endowing her so richly with natural resources that she could afford to do without foreign assistance. Let the foreigner in, and he would exploit this paradise for his own profit. So the budget was compressed to the utmost; the advances of foreign capital were met by impossible conditions, and local industries were created to supply Rumania with the manufactured products which she required and save her from having to import. The new industries were protected by high tariffs and favoured with credits at preferential rates by the National Bank. The landowners who had had their estates expropriated were invited to recoup their losses by investing their remaining capital in them. The invitation was accepted, and a new class was created with interests vested in the maintenance of the Liberal Party and its economic policy.

Besides taxes on imports, M. Vintila Bratianu's system included taxes on exports. The object of this was a double one. The Rumanian was to get his food cheap, while the foreigner, by paying heavily for it, was to contribute to the Rumanian budget. Meanwhile the public services were kept on short commons. Government employees were paid starvation wages, and money for public works, railways, and the like was doled out with parsimonious care.

This system was sound enough as a temporary measure, but no country could stand it for long. Rumania has had ten years of it, and the strain is beginning to tell. In the first place, the State officials have become accustomed to look anywhere except to the Government for their pay. Baksheesh was an established institution in Rumania before the war, but it has now developed beyond all bounds, to the utter demoralization of all public services. The magistrate, the gendarme, and every Government employee are not only for sale but will

render no service unless they are bought. If you want to send a telegram you have to pay the telegraph clerk for doing so. The railways are in a state of decay and neglect which makes them utterly inadequate to the economic needs of the country. The system of export and import taxes, though excellent for industry, has proved disastrous for agriculture. The peasant has to pay heavily for his ploughs and phosphates, and gets a poor price for his wheat and maize. If he wants to borrow money, he has to pay extortionate rates of interest, since the closing of the door to foreign capital has produced a drastic shortage of credit.

Rumania is an essentially agricultural country, and the unfavourable conditions created for the peasants by M. Vintila Bratianu's economic policy are one of the main causes of the unpopularity of the Liberal regime. People have tried to convince him that he is on the wrong track. Their efforts have all been in vain. He knows that he is unpopular, but he is sustained by a fanatical belief that he has a mission to lead his country through the wilderness of post-war difficulties to the milk and honey of a prosperity achieved by its own striving. He has balanced his budget; he has settled most of Rumania's foreign debts; he is holding the rate of the leu and hopes to stabilize it. He is convinced that he is right and that everybody else is wrong.

Meanwhile trade is being throttled by his system of tariffs and taxes. The general condition of credit is so poor that a firm with a first-class reputation has to pay at least 15 per cent. for money. The number of bankruptcies last year exceeded the total for the two previous years. Even the favoured industries created and sustained by the Government are in straits. Rumania in its present state has been justly likened to a man who stints himself of food and clothes for economy's sake until in the end he becomes unfit to work and earn his living.

The remarkable thing is that the system has been left to work so long and do so much harm. The explanation lies first in the fact that the majority of Rumanian capital is now associated with it. The new industries which were to make Rumania independent of foreign countries were developed as a preserve of the Liberal Party; the National Bank, which is the fountain-head of all credit, is under

Liberal control. It was impossible for a new company to get its statutes approved or to obtain any credit facilities unless it had ties of some sort with the Liberal Party. Thus the whole banking organization of the country, together with the industries which are based on it, is in Liberal hands and dependent on Liberal economic policy. A second reason is the extraordinary authority and prestige which the name of Bratianu commands in Rumania. Joan Bratianu, the father of Jonel and Vintila, was the leader of the Liberal Party all through its campaign for democratic ideals at the end of the last century. Jonel himself brought Rumania into the war on the side of the allies, and holds the credit with his country for the creation of Greater Rumania. He, too, gave her the great reforms which undoubtedly saved her from Bolshevism. His position after the war was thus comparable to that of Masaryk in Czechoslovakia, Pilsudski in Poland, or Pashitch in Yugoslavia. In addition, he possessed the unbounded confidence of King Ferdinand. These things combined to make his authority unassailable, and his authority was extended to cover the financial and economic aims pursued by his brother. Even when a Bratianu Cabinet was succeeded by an Averescu Cabinet, as happened from time to time, the economic policy remained sacrosanct. General Averescu's ministers of finance took no decision of importance without first consulting Vintila Bratianu. So the fatal conditions have operated until the country has been brought to its present parlous state.

In practice the economic policy, which began as a legitimate means of husbanding the country's resources, has come to be an instrument to preserve the power of the Liberal Party. The Bratianus had no objection to turning over the administration occasionally to General Averescu because they knew that he had no internal policy which would conflict with their own, but they have consistently fought the development of the National and Peasants' Parties, because they recognized in their demands ideas and principles incompatible with the maintenance of Liberal hegemony. All the means practised in the countries of Eastern Europe to prevent the free expression of public opinion in the Press during election campaigns and at the polls, were employed to keep the opposition in check. Nor did Jonel Bratianu's

dispositions to secure the maintenance of the Liberal Party's domination for a long period of years stop there. The full truth about Prince Carol's renunciation of his rights to the succession is not yet known. But it is certain that he sympathized with the aims and ideals of the opposition; it is certain that Dr. Maniu and the other leaders of the National Peasants' Party were in favour of giving him every opportunity of going back on his decision, and that Jonel Bratianu firmly rejected this proposal. By the arrest and prosecution of M. Manoilescu he showed that he was determined that Prince Carol should not return to the country, and by the composition which he devised for the Council of Regency he certainly did his best to assure his own position as the arbiter of Rumania's affairs.

The development of the opposition to the Liberal regime to its present pitch has been gradual. The protests of the National Party of Transylvania and the Peasants' Party date back to at least eight years ago; as far back as 1922 the Transylvanians boycotted the coronation of King Ferdinand at Alba Julia as a demonstration against the illegality of the general elections which had been conducted that year by the Liberal Party, but it could not be said then that the opposition had a really universal and national character as it has today. For the last two years, however, the two parties have joined forces under the title of the National Peasants' Party, and since then their demand for a change of regime has become more and more direct and persistent.

The Liberals have professed to regard their campaign as pure agitation by a pack of demagogues who were tired of being in opposition and wanted to share the sweets of office. Such a representation is not justified. The leaders of the party are men of strong convictions and principles who have proved their disinterestedness by refusing all the offers of the Liberals to compromise. Just before King Ferdinand's death, when the sovereign was anxious that the parties should make peace, Jonel Bratianu proposed to Dr. Maniu, the head of the National Peasants' Party, that the Liberals and the opposition should share the seats in the Chamber in the ratio of 3 to 1, and that the National Peasants should have half the portfolios in the Cabinet. Dr. Maniu declined, because to have accepted would have meant throwing

over the whole programme of reform for which he had fought for eight years. There have been men who have deserted the opposition to join the Liberals and are now ministers. That will never be said of Maniu. For thirty years he has been in opposition, first in Hungary, now in Rumania. He is a quiet, determined little man, a Catholic by religion; his ideals are ethical as well as political, and he means to pursue them until he can put them into practice.

The programme of the National Peasants' Party is the negation of the practice and policy of the Liberals. They stand for the interests of agriculture as opposed to those of industry, for the development of the country with the help of foreign capital, for administrative reform and the decentralization of authority; above all, for the emancipation of the Government services from political influence, for fair elections, and for the suppression of corruption by paying State officials a living wage. What gives the opposition its strength, particularly in the new provinces, is the disgust of the people at the demoralization of the administration. They realize that the laws do not count, since the magistrates, the local authorities, and the police are prepared for a bribe, or, to oblige a friend of the Government, to misinterpret or overrule them. This feeling is naturally strongest to the west of the Carpathians, for, whatever may be said against Austro-Hungarian administration, it was at least methodical and exact, but even in old Rumania, where the influence of Constantinople sticks fast, it is admitted that the present degree of corruption is abnormal.

Today the National Peasants' Party is far more than a regional or class organization. Its ranks have been swelled by persons of all sorts and conditions: country gentry of the *boyar* type, men of business, members of the liberal professions, all discontented with the state into which the country has drifted under the Liberals. Of late it has even become fashionable for the *jeunesse dorée* of Bucarest to profess sympathy with the Tsaranists, as the party is commonly called. There is no doubt that it represents the majority of the Rumanian people and would sweep the country if fair elections were held.

Fair elections are all that Dr. Maniu demands, so confident is he that his party commands the support of the masses. In Rumania it is the prerogative of the

Crown to decide when fresh elections shall be held, and it is customary for the sovereign to entrust the task of holding them to the minister who has his confidence at the moment. Under King Ferdinand it was always either Jonel Bratianu or General Averescu who made the elections, with the result that old Rumania remained master of the situation. The National Peasants' Party could not contest the King's authority without incurring the charge of disloyalty, but now that his authority is vested in a Council of Regency, whose members have still to prove their title collectively to command respect, it feels justified in openly voicing its claim to represent the people better than the present Government. By a series of mass meetings held in the provincial centres since the beginning of the year, and culminating in the great demonstration in Bucarest on March 18, the party has reiterated its demand for the resignation of the Liberals.

There is no outward sign so far that these demonstrations have produced any change in the situation. M. Vintila Bratianu and M. Duca, the Minister of the Interior, profess to be unmoved by what they describe as "les agitations de la rue," and the Regency has made no move. If there is, indeed, no change, the situation is serious. The Council of Regency will have shown itself to be, what a great many persons believe, mere puppets of the Liberals, and the authority of the Crown will be gravely compromised. The opposition will be forced to adopt less constitutional methods to make its force felt. The National Peasants' Party intends to hold another and still larger mass meeting shortly at Alba Julia. What will happen there nobody knows. The leaders may issue a call for passive resistance to the Government; they may appeal to Prince Carol to return. In any case, the outlook for Rumania is bad.

Fortunately, there are signs that the Council of Regency realizes the gravity of the situation and is using its influence tentatively with an unwilling Prime Minister to induce him to retire. If that is so, the change from the old order to the new can be foreseen, the revolution will have been effected peaceably, the Council of Regency will have established its reputation with the nation for wisdom and firmness, and a new era of development will open for Rumania.

Poland, Germany and the Corridor*

By C. F. Melville

THE English people, often more sentimental than logical, and imbued with a traditional sympathy for the "under dog," frequently quite irrespective of his merits or demerits, have expressed this idiosyncratic trait in their national character to a marked degree in their reactions to the political disputes of Continental nations. This is one of our generous faults—and it is in no way a denial of the generosity to admit the absence of logic.

During the war years the great majority of us shouted ourselves hoarse for our allies—allies both large and small, both those we knew something about and those we knew next to nothing about—and, being a kindly, tolerant, but not over well-informed people, genially applauded Mr. Lloyd George's quip about "hanging the Kaiser." Having won the war, some of us are now as concerned on behalf of our ex-enemies as during the course of the struggle we were on behalf of our then allies. Instead of keeping to the middle of the road—that most difficult of tasks—we have rather too easily allowed the pendulum of our sympathies to swing from one absurd extreme to another. The "under dog" of yesterday is the "over-lord" of today, and vice versa. Therefore, many of us have been busily engaged in transforming ourselves from "phobes" to "phils," and from "phils" to "phobes."

Treaty revisionist propaganda has not been slow to plant its seeds in this fertile soil. Some success has so far attended the efforts of the propagandists, at least to the extent that many people in this country today believe that Poland and the Succession States were freak creations of the allied statesmen at Versailles and have no idea that these countries constitute liberated peoples and old States resurrected.

One of the most interesting examples is the case of Poland, and the plea that the Polish Corridor should be abolished so that East Prussia should not be territorially separated from the German Reich. Before dealing with the respective historical, ethnographic, and economic arguments on each side, I should like in the first place to deal with the major question of the intrinsic desirability, or otherwise, of the existence of the Polish Corridor.

There are those in this country who, inspired by

* *A different view on the Corridor was stated in "Seeds of War,"* ENGLISH REVIEW, *November* 1927, *and "The Dawes Plan and Russia" last January.*

POLAND, GERMANY AND THE CORRIDOR

POLAND AND GERMANY.

THE ABOVE MAP ILLUSTRATES THE VITAL IMPORTANCE TO POLAND OF HER ACCESS TO THE SEA.

sympathy for the German view, argue that the existence of the Corridor is in itself an anomaly, that, indeed, the very idea of territorial corridors is one of the freaks of the Peace Conference. A corridor, so this argument runs, is a fantastic, unnatural thing, which is bound sooner or later to lead to friction and, perhaps, even to war. Therefore, the argument continues, abolish the Polish Corridor and thereby remove this cancer from the body politic of Europe. Well, let us take the map and eliminate from it the Polish Corridor. What do we find? A map devoid of corridors? We do not. We find, instead, that by the very act of abolishing the Polish Corridor we have but created the German Corridor, that we have, in fact, merely substituted a corridor running east-west for one that ran north-south.

To take the broadest and most disinterested standpoint —quite apart from the welter of German and Polish historical and ethnographical claims—it becomes evident that the abolition of one "evil," as the pro-German school of thought would term it, can only result in the creation of another and larger evil. In short, Poland would be bolted and barred from the sea by a German barrier, a narrow slip of German territory, indeed, a German Corridor, whereas Germany in any case has access to the sea, Polish Corridor or no Polish Corridor. Without possession of the Corridor and the use of the port of the free City of Danzig a country of some thirty million or more inhabitants would be entirely landlocked. In comparison the Polish Corridor only separates some two and a-quarter million Germans in East Prussia from the rest of the German population. And it does not cut any Germans off from the sea. Furthermore, the Polish Corridor is a corridor pierced with doors—transit and other facilities for communication between the Reich and East Prussia being provided by the Polish Government by arrangement with the German Government.

This seems to me to be the most important aspect of this controversy—of far more moment than the rival historical and ethnographical claims. Since, however, these rival claims do exist, and since recently we have heard a good deal more of the German than of the Polish standpoint, it might help towards preserving a balance to give here a brief résumé of the ethnographical and historical aspect of the question.

POLAND, GERMANY AND THE CORRIDOR

To begin with comparatively recent history, "Dantiscus" says in the April issue of THE ENGLISH REVIEW that Germany cannot accept her present eastern frontiers as permanent, especially as in this instance the Versailles Treaty flouts the principles of self-determination enunciated by the late President Wilson. But the thirteenth of Wilson's famous fourteen points refers specifically to Poland as follows:

> An independent Polish State should be erected which should include the territories inhabited by indisputable Polish populations, which should be assured a free and secure access to the sea, and whose political and economic independence and integrity should be guaranteed by International Covenant.

It is not true to say that the Poles base their claims primarily on history—to them the historical forms but part of a general claim, based upon many factors. Historically speaking, it is rather futile to argue about the prehistoric era in the territory which now comprises the Polish Corridor. The German apologists admit that from the sixth century the corridor territory was inhabited by Slavonic tribes, and the Polish apologists are content not to claim anything beyond that age. "Dantiscus" avers that until 1308 Pommerellia, the corridor territory, never was Polish, but was under the government of its own autonomous rulers. This statement overlooks the fact that medieval Poland consisted of a number of dukedoms, including Pommerellia, governed by their autonomous dukes. Likewise with regard to the argument that the Teutonic knights were in possession of Danzig and Pommerellia in 1308, it must be recalled that the Teutonic knights were summoned as feudatories of the Polish Crown to help the Polish King Ladislas Lokietek in his war with the Margraves of Brandenburg. They violated their obligations, conquered Danzig, and put to the sword the Polish garrison and population. The Holy See issued two verdicts (1320 and 1339), ordering the Teutonic knights to return the occupied territory, and a Polish war against the knights for the repossession of this territory went on for 145 years. This attempt on the part of the Teutonic knights to separate Poland from the sea resulted, however, in the debacle of Grunwald in 1410, and after their renewed attempt in 1463 their existence in the Baltic was finally liquidated by Poland in 1525.

Another German assertion—that between 1454 and

1569 Pommerellia never belonged to Poland because it had its own local government—does not stand in the light of the following facts:

The province of Prussia had home rule, and so did Posen, Cracow, Lwow, and Warsaw. The Statutes of 1569 did not abolish Prussian home rule. From 1454 West Prussia was governed by Polish Voyvods. Lastly, the German seizure of Pommerellia led to the destruction of the Order of the Teutonic Knights; and the participation of Prussia in the partition of Poland, by which she obtained Pommerellia, again resulted in the liberation of Poland as one of the results of the European War. This is the verdict of history.

This brings me to the ethnographic aspect of the controversy. To lump together the predominantly German population of the Free City of Danzig with the German sections of the population of the "Corridor" is a statistical *coup de force* on the part of "Dantiscus" which is both extremely misleading and definitely false. Danzig is a separate political entity, and its population cannot on any grounds be computed as part of a general figure for the Corridor. Likewise, it is begging the question to allude to the Kashubs as a political entity listinct from the Poles, and brought over to the Polish cause by Catholic clerical domination. The Kashubs are as much an ethnic Polish group as the Kuyavians, Silesians, Podhalians, Mazurs, and other Polish tribes. As well distinguish between the Germanism of Bavarians, Saxons, Swabians, and Tyrolese. Even so, and taking the German census of 1910, the Polish-speaking population of the Corridor, as apart from that of the Free City of Danzig, was in excess of the German-speaking populations, the figures, according to this census, being: Population, 964,704; German speaking, 411,621; Polish speaking, 433,281; German and Polish speaking, 14,807; Kashubian speaking, 104,585. In addition, it should be pointed out that the German census in question included not only Prussian officials, but the large number of Prussian military quartered in the country; yet in spite of this the Polish figure, in the German census, stands highest.

Passing to Polish statistics we find that the Pommerellian population in the 1921 census was as follows: Population, 939,259, of which the Poles numbered 743,220 and the Germans 196,039; and, according to the

estimates for 1927, out of a population of 962,981 persons, the number of Germans stood at 114,000. In the 1922 elections to the Seym (Polish Parliament) the Polish lists secured 84·7 per cent. of the votes and the German 15·3 per cent., and in 1928 the percentages were 84·8 per cent. Polish and 15·2 per cent. German.

Further evidence of the Polish character of the Corridor may be adduced by the fact that in the overwhelmingly Kashubian district only Polish representatives were elected to the German Parliament in the old days. Since 1871 until the war the population of what is now Polish Pommerellia invariably elected Polish deputies to represent them at Berlin.

The alleged maladministration of the River Vistula is another point urged by German apologists against the necessity of maintaining Danzig—situated at the mouth of that river—as a free city through which Poland has access to the sea. The assertion that four-fifths of the river is not navigable is, of course, correct, but here it is necessary to explain that this is hardly the fault of Poland, as, up to the time of the war, Russia, which controlled the stretch of the river in question, deliberately prevented its regulation. Give the Poles time and they will eventually surmount the problem of those 800 kilometres.

"Dantiscus" avers that Danzig has been brought into far closer connection with Poland than is acceptable. To this the Poles may well retort: Inacceptable to whom? To Berlin, yes. But hardly from the standpoint of the economic advantage of the Danzigers themselves. For example: in 1913 the number and tonnage of ships entering and clearing the port was respectively 5,765 ships and 1,861,691 tons. In 1927 the figures were respectively 13,892 and 7,832,320. Likewise the import and export figures, in tons, show a corresponding upward movement between 1913 and 1927. Imports and exports in 1913 totalled 2,112,101 tons, while in 1927 they rose to 7,897,614. A comparison between the pre-war and post-war figures demonstrates beyond doubt that Danzig is the natural port for Polish trade and is reaping immense advantages from its monopolistic position.

Other arguments have been advanced time and time again. The Germans say that East Prussia was only isolated from the Reich by the Versailles Treaty. The Poles assert that East Prussia never formed an integral

part of Germany (either the Holy Roman Empire or the German Confederation), and that it only became included in the German Empire in 1871. They also assert that East Prussia was at best only a Prussian colony and remained a fief of the Polish kings until 1667. To the German claim that Germany and East Prussia were contiguous the Polish answer is that the fact that the Polish population of the Corridor became subjected to Germany from 1772 to 1919 did not make Poles into Germans, and that the natural isolation of East Prussia from the rest of Germany always existed, apart from the fact that a contiguous position was for a time established by the German seizure of the intervening Polish territory.

A number of other assertions of "Dantiscus" call for a rejoinder, particularly the insinuations that Poland has not given up her claim to Danzig. In fact, such a claim has never existed as, even at the time of the ancient Polish Republic, Danzig enjoyed perfect liberty under the suzerainty of the Polish kings, and was, in fact, even then a free city.

Space does not permit the regulation of all the misleading arguments and statements, but I think that in the foregoing the facts speak sufficiently for themselves to demonstrate that (1) on grounds of equity no less than on grounds of political realism the Polish Corridor stands vindicated; (2) the economic advantages to Danzig are proven; (3) ethnographically Poland has figures on her side, and therefore "the better of two good cases"; and (4) of the rival historical claims, those of Poland tip the scale more than those of Germany.

I am particularly anxious here not to emulate some of the anti-Polish publicists who dismiss with a gesture the claims of the other side, and I do not regard all the Polish assertions as infallible. I do not deny the existence of the German claims, which deserve to be weighed in the balance. If they were found wanting at the Peace Conference, it was only because of two strong cases the Polish case was the stronger and approximated closer to the general sense of international equity, economic facts, and political realism. Conditions of transit and the drawing of the frontiers in relation to private properties on the German-Polish frontier of the Corridor are, of course, not ideal. But they are improving by mutual arrangement, and under the pressure of economic facts. The conduct of an ill-advised, one-sided and violent

revisionist propaganda can only retard—in the case of Germany, as of Hungary—the progress toward readjustment of anomalies, injustices, and hardships. It is dangerous to allow sentimentality to run away with sense in these matters. The sanctity of the Peace Treaties must be taken as the point of departure to arrive at necessary improvements and readjustments. Try to reverse overnight the results of the Allied victory in the European War, and you will be faced with another European War. The detail of the Peace Settlement may—and does—leave much to be desired. But the general structure was erected on a sound basis. Our job is to improve the detail, and not to retard progress by trying to pull down the general structure.

When all is said and done, however, it is the existing realities in Europe which are of vital importance when the Polish question is under consideration. I have said that in my opinion the Poles undeniably have a better case than the Germans, and that, although all their arguments are not convincing, the greater part of them certainly are. But it is when one passes from controversy about the past to the outlook for the future that one realizes—at least so it seems to me—that on the whole the Peace Settlement was essentially sound. Poland has a future. She is not yet accorded the status of a Great Power. The new Poland is probably too young in experience yet to receive that title. But that she is on the way to that status is, to my mind, and in the opinion of many neutral observers, beyond all shadow of doubt.

In the economic field Poland is not only herself a very rich country but she is also a transit territory linking up the Baltic; that is to say, she links up the Scandinavian and Baltic States with the southern regions of Central Europe including Austria, Hungary, Jugoslavia, and Rumania, and, through the last-named two countries, she links up with the Mediterranean. Likewise Poland forms an economic bridge between Germany and Russia.

In virtue of her centralized position Poland sits astride the cross-roads of two great routes, and enjoying access to the sea, she has great possibilities. These considerations must in the long run make their practical appeal no less to Britain than to the Continental nations.

In the political field Poland appears to be becoming more and more a necessary and stabilizing factor in post-war Europe. The day may well come when even in

Germany the presence of Poland as a buffer between herself and Russia will be recognized as an advantage. Post-war relations between Germany and Soviet Russia were for many years close. They are now by no means so close. Germany is more and more moving away from Rapallo to Locarno, from the dangerous atmosphere of the "Abmachungen" (the secret arrangements between Berlin and Moscow) to the healthier atmosphere of Geneva. Under these conditions relations between Berlin and Warsaw are bound to improve as time goes on.

Poland, like Germany, is an important member of the League of Nations. She is participating more and more in the general work of the Western comity of nations. She is there and she has the will and the capacity not only to remain, but also to increase her present strength. Internally the political, financial and economic situation is steadily improving in spite of inevitable setbacks from time to time. Externally her relations with other Powers show evidence of the growth of political balance and experience. In this respect one has only to recall the recent example of Polish good sense, dignity and sang-froid when faced with the violent denunciations of the Soviet Government produced by the *affaire Voikoff*.

A writer known to be sympathetic to Poland—the distinguished political journalist who signs himself "Augur"—has pointed out very rightly that privilege must be tempered by a sense of duty. Poland, as a Great Power, this writer argues, must assume responsibilities and duties of a wider range than those circumscribed by her own self-interest. This is friendly advice which one may assume the Poles will not ignore. Recent events encourage the neutral observer to take an optimistic view. There will doubtless be backslidings, but the general trend will, I think, be progressive and upward. Eventually Poland will become a source of strength to the League of Nations and a valuable addition to the European comity of nations. Provided her rulers are inspired by good sense and constructive ideals? Yes! But this is an axiom which applies to all States and rulers, the large and the small, the new and the old.

The last word, as I have said, appears to rest with the existence of the European realities. Poland is one of those realities. As such we must take her, and it is upon this truth that the dealings of International diplomacy with Poland must be based.

Young Woodley

By Anthony M. Ludovici

PERHAPS one of the most intricate problems of the present day is to determine by what standards our newspaper criticism, whether of literature, the drama, the graphic arts or music is inspired and written. For myself I have long ceased to be able to find any principle in it, except that it seems almost universally to be guided merely by the popularity either of a production or of a particular artist. If it is known to the modern critic that whatever he may say, the production he is confronted with, or its author, is an established popular success, then he appears to entertain no other alternative than that of adding his own eulogy to the general chorus of praise. If, on the other hand, he is confronted by something quite new, produced by an author whose popularity still lies in the balance, then, owing to the fact that he has no standards, his criticism is usually valueless as a guide, right only by a fluke, and, if adverse, merely an opportunity for the display of cleverness at the expense of the unpopular artist.

Two plays occur to my mind which are an example of the kind of works that offer a problem in standards to the dramatic critic. They are *Fata Morgana* and *Young Woodley*. In the first, a young married woman who, neither through her own position in life, nor that of her husband, can be regarded as in any way directly responsible for the morality or welfare of a certain youth, with whom she accidentally finds herself alone, proceeds to make violent love to him, and in the absence of her husband and the youth's family, to commit adultery with him. So far, so good. No one receives any particular injury here, except the betrayed husband, and even he is easily persuaded, by an ingenious display of innocence on the part of his wife, that the youth's frank claim to have enjoyed her caresses may be brushed aside as madness. The old-fashioned playgoer, who believes that "the wages of sin is death," may be startled when he comes to the end of this play to find that nothing untoward occurs—that after this barefaced betrayal of her husband, the young wife and her young lover resume the routine of their everyday lives as if very little had happened. And the present-day successor

to this early Victorian human relic, who is more rationalistic, and therefore no longer sensitive with regard to the old Christian moral code, may, even in spite of his greater enlightenment, feel that the laws of realism have been offended by the author of the play, since he has depicted two sensitive and passionate human beings as capable of coupling, and then of dismissing each other without further ado like the lower animals.

Such a playgoer, basing his criticism, not on moral considerations, but merely on modern psychology and the demands of what is plausible and possible, even among latter-day humans, may claim that *Fata Morgana* infringed his code also, because it was only a fantastic peg on which to hang a salacious and not very edifying episode—a sort of weird fairy-tale for adults with a stirring immoral situation quite untrue to anything except the life of the lower mammals.

But, at least in *Fata Morgana*, the action was, up to a point, psychologically defensible; for in it there was no mere playing with human passion for the sake of the game alone. The kindling of passion, although anarchical and in defiance of everything except merely animal relations, did after all lead to a consummation, and a consummation which, though psychologically impossible, was conceivable on a very low bestial plane of mental and nervous development. In fact, *Fata Morgana* only required to be slightly modified in order to become entirely unassailable from the standpoint of the strictest realism. For instance, in order to make it quite plausible and true to life, all that the author need have done would have been to make both the youth and the defaulting wife very much lower in the scale of human beings, less highly organized, less sensitive, less capable of anything except coupling. Had he made them members of a thoroughly coarse and besotted order of humanity, he would have protected himself even against the criticism of the realist, and no one could have accused him of having written a fantastic story purely for the sake of its sensual appeal. His mistake, therefore, was to depict two human beings who were obviously richly endowed with those emotions and sentiments, and that intelligence and refinement, which are among the qualities that man has acquired in his ascent from the lower animals, and then for the sake of

titillating the modern taste for indelicacy, to make them behave as if they did not possess the very qualities he had endowed them with. Thus the realistic criticism of *Fata Morgana*, though it may be free from all moralic acid, must, nevertheless, reject *Fata Morgana* just as wholly as a criticism based on mid-Victorian and Christian standards. The moral of it all is this—that it is permissible from no standpoint—æsthetic, ethical, or scientific—to stir up dirt merely for the sake of stirring up dirt. If a great or useful truth can be enunciated only through the stirring up of dirt, then nobody, except Puritans, could cavil at the unsavoury process. If, however, for the sake of actually perverting the truth, dirt is wilfully stirred up, we are then entitled to suspect that dirt alone is the object, the end, the effect desired. "Not when the waters of truth are filthy, but when they are shallow doth he who knoweth refuse to go down into them," said Nietzsche.

In *Young Woodley*, however, although the situation is very much the same as in *Fata Morgana*, it is even less defensible. For here, although we encounter the same very young man, and the same defaulting young wife, there are several important differences which make the play less plausible and less realistic than its forerunner. While *Young Woodley* would have to be condemned by mid-Victorian and Christian morality just as wholeheartedly as *Fata Morgana*, it ought, according to the standards of human realism and human psychology, alone to be rejected much more completely and wholeheartedly. For in *Young Woodley* the use of the fairy-tale element, the fantastic and the untrue, for the sake of the salacity of the central situation, is pushed to very much more impossible extremes.

In *Fata Morgana* the young wife bore no responsible relation (except that which seniority perhaps always imposes) to the youth with whom she betrayed her husband. And the criticism of the moralist, as I have pointed out, rested merely upon the ease and impunity with which both transgressors escape all the consequences of their transgression; while from the amoral and realistic standpoint, the criticism rested upon the inconsistency of the action—the ease with which two sensitive human beings part and return to the ordinary routine of their

lives after passionately coupling. The moralist and the amoral realist thus both see an error in the lack of consequences, though from different standpoints.

But in *Young Woodley* the first thing that strikes one is that the young wife is in a position of responsibility in regard to the young man whom, she frankly admits, she encourages to fall in love with her. She is his housemaster's wife! Unlike the woman in *Fata Morgana*, moreover, she does not find herself alone with him by accident, but actually creates situations in which she will meet him. These are the first supremely fantastic elements. For while as Victorian moralists we may be horrified at the thought of such a situation, as realists free from moralic acid we naturally assume that if a woman in that position can so far forget herself and the responsibilities of her own and her husband's situation as to allow free rein to her inclinations with one of her husband's pupils, her passion for the youth must really be so great as to make her forget everything; that is to say, its strength in imaginary degrees of measurement must be so enormous that it becomes almost grandeur and is partly excusable on that score alone. But in that case we expect it actually to forget all else. We expect that the impelling force which has been so irresistible as to cause her to forget who she is, where she is, and what the boy himself is, will through its very consistency and power command our respect. We expect her to burn her boats and be ready to bear all the consequences, no matter what they may be. This would be plausible and consistent with her gross breach of convention; moreover, it would possess that grandeur characteristic of all powerful human passion which compels acquiescence in almost everything to which it may lead. But what happens in *Young Woodley*? After having anarchically forgotten her position and its responsibilities, and after having compromised herself and the boy, we find that, after all, it was in no sense an irresistible power that led her to all this, but a mere whim, a passing fancy, which could be laid aside the moment it became convenient to do so. Thus the boy is ruined, and, although Mrs. Simmons is quite convincingly upset, we feel that a week-end in Eastbourne will put her right.

From the standpoint of the Victorian moralist, this first fantastic element is to be condemned because it transgresses the accepted moral code. But from the point of view of the realist, it is utterly vicious, because it presents as a motive for a very grave action something that turns out to be no adequate motive at all—a mere passing whim, a caprice. Even the realist, who may have abandoned Victorian morality, may still believe in sanity, law, and order. And he will feel that any woman, who on the score of a mere whim can so far forget her own and her husband's position as to do what Mrs. Simmons does, is either a dangerous lunatic or else quite unreal. Ever since life began, and ever since civilization has been known, all men except Puritans have looked with an indulgent eye upon the deeds, no matter how terrible and inconvenient, which have been the outcome of the great passion which merges into grandeur. But all men in such circumstances have at least insisted on being convinced that the great passion and the grandeur were there. When, therefore, the terrible and inconvenient deeds occur without the requisite motive power, sane men of all ages have rightly suspected either lunacy or a degree of feebleness in individual direction which, by making the whim of the moment paramount as a motive, is little short of neurotic irresponsibility.

The next point that strikes one in *Young Woodley* is that, unlike the pair in *Fata Morgana*, the parties in the love affair—which, be it remembered, is depicted as strong enough to make them overstep all conventions and duties—never reach the consummation of their passion, and apparently intend to survive without doing so. Once more, therefore, *Young Woodley* is less defensible than *Fata Morgana*, because, if we acknowledge the author's first premise—the influence of a passion strong enough to override all obstacles—we are even more astonished at its fizzling out without the consummation than with it. With the consummation the fizzling out is unreal enough; but without it, it is inconceivable. We are led, in short, to deny that any passion could ever have existed. For we must remember that three of the greatest love situations ever depicted—those of Dante and Beatrice, Romeo and Juliet, and Heathcliff and the

elder Catherine—were all examples of unconsummated passion, truly and realistically depicted, in that they are shown never to have relaxed or ended except in death.

So in *Young Woodley*, even from the purely realistic standpoint, we have two elements much too fantastic to pretend to bear any relation to human truth except among lunatics.

We may ask, then, what are the merits of such a play? Is it merely a kind of prophecy, a sort of mirror held up to what life will be in, say, twenty-five years time, when a long schooling in the belief that "nothing matters" will have converted us all into irresponsible, passionless invalids, acting under the impulse of the feeblest whim, and overriding all conventions for a farthing's worth of excitement; or is it merely a fairy-tale, a fantastic peg on which to hang a salacious situation? Whichever it is, it is equally to be condemned, because, unless one is sufficiently far gone along the road which may lead to the condition to which we shall attain twenty-five years hence, or unless one can enjoy indelicacy for its own sake, one cannot regard the play as desirable.

The way the audience applauded on the night I was there, and the manner in which almost every paper has acclaimed it, forces one to ask oneself very seriously what on earth we moderns think we are up to. Whither are we going? The only person, apart from the actors, who comes out of all this with shining colours, appears to be the Lord Chamberlain himself, who seems to have scented something wrong about the play from the very first. Unfortunately, however, it is to be suspected that even he fails because he does not act from a general principle. If he took as his standpoint that everything which really serves the cause of truth, or the cause of human progress, and sincerely and artistically serves that cause, should be passed, no matter how much filth it had to stir up in achieving its object; and that everything which merely stirs up filth as an end in itself, and uses fantastic and unreal pegs to hang indecent situations upon, should be condemned and censored, we should soon have better plays, and incidentally a less anarchical tone among both our young people and our less responsible adults.

Action Française and the Vatican

By Percy Sandys

MR. WARD'S article in the March issue of THE ENGLISH REVIEW will have been read with general interest. In the present article I shall endeavour to satisfy the readers of the REVIEW—even if I fail to satisfy Mr. Ward—that my facts are not inaccurate, and that the interpretation I have put on them is not unfair. The statement in Mr. Ward's article that the *Action Française* "was already condemned by Pius X in January 1914" is a mistake, as will be shown later. Pius X was quite satisfied that *Action Française* did more good than harm, and among many friendly observations made by the Pope in 1914 were the following—"*Aussi moi vivant l'Action Française ne sera pas condamné*"; "*Elle fait trop de bien*"; "*Elle défend les principes d'autorité*"; "*Elle défend l'ordre.*" The question is whether the changed attitude of the Vatican is not due to the fact—resented in Rome—that in national affairs *Action Française* insists on placing its duty to country above the Church's claim to obedience. The present Pope's "repeated repudiation of such a view" will hardly carry conviction to those acquainted with the facts.

Mr. Ward is surprised that I should have referred to M. Maurras as the only agnostic among the Royalist leaders. Perhaps the three men he names (M. Pujo, M. Moreau, and M. Bainville) might be included, although they are not leaders of the same position as M. Maurras and M. Daudet. But Mr. Ward's suggestion that among the leaders M. Daudet is "the only believing Christian" is far from correct, as the following list will show:

Catholics.	*Free-thinkers.*
Léon Daudet (political director).	Chas. Maurras (a director).
G. Larpent (general secretary).	Pujo (editor).
Pierre Lecœur (secretary of the Action Française League).	Jacques Bainville (political correspondent).
	Lucien Moreau.

Catholics.

Maxime Real del Sarte (founder and president of the "King's Henchmen.")
E. de Resnes.
Paul Robain.
Mᵉ de Roux.
Comte Bernard de Vesius (president of the League of Action Française).
Georges Calzant (secretary of the Action Française Students).
Admiral Schwerer.
Robert de Bois Fleuris.

Another statement in my article which Mr. Ward declares to be "surprising" is my observation that "for many years after the third Republic was established the Church reserved her favours for the Royalists and cold-shouldered the new regime." The history of the Church's attitude to the Republic may be summarized as follows. Up to 1892—a period of nearly 22 years—a policy of cold-shouldering was strictly followed. In 1892 Leo XIII attempted to make a break in this policy and published his encyclical "Immortale Dei," which suggested a policy of *ralliement* to the new regime. Leo XIII professed "advanced" political views and his encyclical *rerum novarum* was the Church's authorization of the Christian-Democrat parties in modern politics. How far the opinions of Leo XIII may have been influenced by a desire to appease the growing anti-clericalism of the young Republic, it is impossible to say; but in pursuance of the same policy the Papal Nuncio, Cardinal Rampolla—a brilliant diplomat of the end of the nineteenth century—induced the Conservative and Royalist leader, M. de Mun, to rally to the Republic. In later years M. de Mun regretted having followed this advice—"*Je ne me serais jamais rallié, si j'avais pu prévoir les abbés démocrates.*"

An unforeseen result of Leo XIII's democratic policy was that it split the Catholics in France into different parties, and the anti-clericals took advantage of the situation to pass the laws of 1901 and 1904, disestablishing and disendowing the Church, exiling monks and nuns and confiscating their property and that of the churches.

Leo XIII died in 1902, lamenting the failure of his policy; and he was succeeded by Pius X—"the Holy Pope," as he was not unjustly called—who continued in the Papal Chair until his somewhat unexpected death on August 20, 1914. The present Pope, it appears, claims that his policy is in agreement with that of Pius X; and this is assumed by Mr. Ward to be correct. It seems impossible, however, to accept this view in face of the abundant evidence of the personal goodwill of Pius X, not merely for France, but for *Action Française* and M. Maurras. The advocates of such a theory, moreover, have to explain away the fact that Pius X refused to sign the condemnation passed in January 1914 by "the Sacred Congregation of the Index"—without which signature it must remain ineffective—although he lived for seven months after that date. They have also to explain away the fact that Pius X's successor, Benedict XV, failed to sign the condemnation. The suggestion that Benedict XV did not sign "because of the war" can have little weight when it is borne in mind that he did not die until 1922. It is important to observe, moreover, that the original condemnation by the Congregation of the Index was confined to certain books of M. Maurras and to the fortnightly edition of *Action Française*; but the present Pope thought fit, on January 9, 1927, to sign a condemnation of a far more comprehensive character, extending even to the daily issue of *Action Française*.

Pius X had the breadth of mind to see that an open and honest free-thinker, like M. Maurras, was not a danger to religion. Madame Emile Flourens, the widow of a minister, states that, when she and her husband visited Rome in 1909, they had audiences with the Pope, "who spoke on two occasions of *Action Française*, praising its talent, activity, and vigour." In 1913 Cardinal de Cabrières, a *persona grata* with Pius X, said to a priest who was setting out for Paris: "See Maurras and tell him how much Pius X has appreciated his defence" (the book *l'Action Française et la religion Catholique*). "He will receive him next year."

Pius X knew of the book "Anthinéa," but he recognized that a writer who was himself an agnostic could

not be expected to write only for Catholics, ignoring the thirty millions or upwards of people in France who are free-thinkers or *indifférents*. When the book was published in 1901, and again when a new edition was issued in 1912, M. Maurras warned Catholics not to read it—placing it himself, as he said, on his own index. So again, in issuing the edition of 1919, he writes :

Le massacre fini en 1919 (et non en 1922 ou 1923 comme on [Cardinal Andrieu] l'a écrit) je ne pus le relire sans me rappeler avec une emotion qui sera comprise quel chagrin l'une de ces pages avait fait éprouver à quelques croyants. Aucuns d'eux n'admettait l'interpretation injurieuse que nos ennemis communs colportaient. Je l'avais détruite point par point dans un commentaire que les curieux sauront trouver page 149 du livre " L'Action Française et la religion Catholique," mais l'indecision même de ces paroles, le sens qu'on leur prêtait, le trouble qui s'ensuivait n'en causait pas moins un malaise qui ne m'était pas supportable. La page devint blanche et j'écrivis en note—" Les premières éditions portaient à cette place un chapitre xvi qui commençait par ces mots," je transcrirai mon impression finale, et qui tenait une soixantaine de lignes. Je l'ai supprimée. Il m'a paru satisfaisant pour la pensée d'un certain nombre d'amis catholiques vivants et morts et pour un témoignage de profonde reconnaisance *de sacrifier ce chapitre en mémoire de la grande âme de Pie X*.

Again, he writes :

Ce livre n'est pas fait pour eux, ce n'est pas pour eux que je l'ai écrit, il est adressé au Français d'une autre formation que la leur. . . . S'il n'appartient pas à un écrivain national d'oublier trente ou trente et un millions de Français dont l'indifference religieuse est compléte . . . je me fais un devoir de repéter aux autres les avis scrupuleux qui sont les signes de notre loyauté en Politique Religieuse et morale comme dans la politique tout court.

" Politique Religieuse," one of the books referred to by Mr. Ward, was published in 1912, and was certainly not disapproved of by Pius X. But the intrigues of Germanophile enemies of French nationalism at the Vatican succeeded in procuring the writings of M. Maurras to be brought before the Congregation, as mentioned above. This took place on January 15, 1914, and on the same day Pius X received in private audience a French prelate :

" Today they have met to condemn him," said the Pope.

" I know, Holy Father, but what will they do ? " said the priest.

" They will do nothing " (*Faranno niente*), replied the Pope with emphasis.

Before he left, the priest kneeling said :

" Holy Father, I should like to ask your benediction for Charles Maurras."

" Yes," said the Pope, " send it from me."

According to another witness, who had an interview with Pius X in July 1914 (conveying the thanks of M. Maurras for the Pope's intervention), Pius X said, pointing to his desk: " It " (the condemnation) " is there and will not see the light. . . . They came to me in anger like dogs, saying ' Condemn him, most Holy Father, condemn him '; and I answered, ' Begone, read your breviary and pray for him.' "

A witness whose testimony will hardly be questioned, M. Camille Bellaigne, author of the well-known book " Pie X et Rome," has given strong confirmatory evidence. In September 1926 the *Libre Belgique*, a Christian-Socialist and anti-French paper, referred in its leading article to statements in *Action Française*, and asked " la source S.V.P." Thereupon, M. Bellaigne, entirely spontaneously, published the following letter :

Paris, le 10 Sept. 1926.

Monsieur le Directeur,—En son numéro du 16 Septembre et sous cette rubrique " La source S.V.P." *La Libre Belgique* vous prie, vous en premier lieu de lui rendre un service. Il m'est agréable de vous y aider. Vers la fin de Juillet 1914 comme j'avais l'honneur de prendre congé du Pape Pie X, je lui demandai s'il me permettait de porter sa bénédiction à Charles Maurras. Le Saint Père me répondit: " Notre bénédiction ! Mais toutes mes bénédictions; et dites lui qu'il est un beau défenseur de la foi."

Mon admiration et mon amitié pour Maurras m'out rendu ces paroles assez précieuses pour qu'elles demeurent toujours présentes.

Veuillez agréer, Monsieur le Directeur, l'expression de mes sentiments distingués.

CAMILLE BELLAIGNE.

Neither Cardinal Dubois, nor even Cardinal Andrieu, was hostile to *Action Française* a few years ago; it is under the present Pope that extreme hostility has been developed. On the dedication to Cardinal Andrieu of the little book by M. Maurras mentioned by Mr. Ward, the Cardinal wrote a gracious acknowledgment, in the course of which he said :

C'est un monument de piété tendre disait . . . un critique de marque et l'on y retrouve toute la puissance de pensée et toute la finesse de style du constructeur . . . ce livre est un poème . . . vous défendez aussi l'église et ce ne fut jamais plus nécessaire . . . vous défendez l'église avec autant de courage que de talent.

Again, in 1919, following certain suggestions of M. Maurras to Catholics to express their desiderata openly at the coming elections, Cardinal Andrieu wrote :

> Le Cardinal Archevêque de Bordeaux tient à vous remercier . . . il apprécie beaucoup les reflexions qu'elle (la lettre) contient et il serait très heureux de voir les Catholiques et tous les hommes d'ordre entrer à l'occasion de la prochaine consultation nationale dans la voie qu'elle trace. Très suggestif l'article de Charles Maurras . . . et notre aquitaine y fait écho par son article de tête sur la nécessité de poser la question religieuse devant le corps electoral.
>
> Bien paternellement à vous en N.S.
>
> PAULIN CARD. ANDRIEU,
> Arch. de Bordeaux.

M. Maurras asks — and asks in vain — What has happened since 1919 to change benevolent collaboration into bitter and unscrupulous attacks? Following the now notorious letter of Cardinal Andrieu of August 25, 1926, which opened the attack, M. Maurras wrote a long, patient, and respectful letter asking to be told his fault; but the letter was not even acknowledged. Protests, complaints, supplications, appeals to the Sovereign Pontiff's justice have poured into Rome, only to be, for the most part, ignored. Hostility has developed into persecution, so that members of the organization—"The Children of Mary"—are stated to have used (under instructions) the confessional for the purpose of trapping priests into giving absolution too easily for the imaginary offence of reading *Action Française.*

As long as the Vatican continues its flirtation with M. Briand and the Masons, the Church will gain no durable concession in France. Meanwhile the Left looks on complacently, while the Church attacks her own best friends. The late Duke of Orleans, to whom Mr. Ward refers, was considered by many to be too subservient to Rome : the Duke of Guise has no such weakness. He wrote a very friendly letter to M. Maurras in January 1927, just before news of the condemnation reached him; and this was followed by a telegram to M. Maurras and M. Daudet jointly, expressing regret at the Pope's decision "connaisant votre respect de le religion et votre patriotique dévouement aux intérêts nationaux, je vous assure toute ma sympathie."

This action of the Duc de Guise led to the astounding

incident at the marriage of the Princess Anne with the Duke of Apulia. The King of Italy had decided that the marriage of his young cousin should be the most magnificent Royal marriage since the war. Naples was fixed upon as having a fitting setting; the Kings of Spain and Bulgaria announced their intention of being present. Forty princes and princesses were there, and representatives of every State. It had been arranged that Cardinal Ascalesi, Archbishop of Naples, should officiate. Two days before the marriage the Vatican intervened, forbidding the Cardinal to officiate in person. The de Guises were in disgrace; the offence of the Duke's cable to MM. Maurras and Daudet had been added to by his daughter writing a courteous letter to M. Maurras thanking the *Action Française* for a magnificent present. It was intimated, however, that if the Princess made a written apology for sending her letter to M. Maurras, the Holy Father might reconsider his decision. The Duke refused to allow his daughter to submit to this humiliation, with the result that the marriage had to be celebrated by the King of Italy's chaplain.

Mr. Ward endeavours to explain away the extraordinary speech of the Papal Nuncio of January 1, 1927, in praise of the Briand policy as " a purely formal compliment to the pacific intentions of France, as defined by her foreign minister." It will be recollected that M. Poincaré was overthrown by the Cartel in May 1924. After two years of the disastrous policy of the Radicals and Socialists had brought France to the brink of ruin, M. Poincaré was called upon by general acclamation to form a ministry. M. Briand had thrown himself into the Cartellist ranks since 1924; and there have been two currents of opinion on foreign policy in the ministry, represented respectively by the Poincarists and by Briand and the Cartellists. In September 1926 the famous Thoiry lunch of M. Briand and Herr Stresemann took place, at which the evacuation of the Rhineland was openly discussed. This proposal was sharply criticized in a large section of the French Press, including the *Echo de Paris*. It was following on this that the Nuncio went out of his way to compliment, in a formal and public manner, M. Briand on his policy. After offering

the wishes of the *corps diplomatique* for a Happy New Year to President Doumergue, the Nuncio said:

> Daignez les accepter. Ils sont sincères et chaleureux; ils vous disent avec quelle sympathie et quelle satisfaction nous suivons les efforts accomplis par la France pour la pacification des peuples. Nous sommes certains que votre gouvernement poursuivra cette œuvre digne de traditions de votre pays de son âme très noble et de son très grand cœur. La pleine confiance que nous en avions déjà *a été encore confirmée par les projets que votre ministre des affaires étrangères exposait, il y a un peu plus de trois mois* aux représentants d'un si grand nombre de nations. *Nul ne peut se rappeler sans émotion le discours qu'alors il prononça. Ses paroles si éloquentes et si profondement senties exprimaient l'aspiration des peuples*, etc.

This strong pronouncement of the Papal approval of the Briand policy called forth criticism from the French Press, even from the cautious and semi-official *Temps*. Whilst the Papal Nuncio in Paris was thus pouring praise upon the Briand policy, the Papal Nuncio, Pacelli, in Berlin, was exerting all his influence to throw the German Centre Party into the arms of the German Nationalists. The same Papal Nuncio was present—clearly with the approval of the Holy See—at a meeting in favour of the "Anschluss" of Germany.

There can be little doubt that the German influences which worked so hard during the war are still active at Rome. Pope Benedict complained to a French visitor during the war that he was "obsessed by the German coterie." The conduct of the Papacy during the war so bitterly disappointed Catholic Belgians and annoyed the French that M. Maurras wrote a generous defence ("Le Pape, la guerre et la paix") of Pope Benedict after an attack on him by a Catholic in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*. But the present Pope, unfortunately, appears to be entirely in agreement with his Secretary of State.

Mr. Ward states that the *Correspondance Catholique Franco-Allemande* was, in its second or third number, "severely censured" by Cardinal Dubois. The fact is that after the exposure by *Action Française* had continued for many weeks of what had become a public scandal, the Bishop of Lille withdrew Abbé Dumulier from the direction of the paper, and put him more or less into retreat. But this was only just in time; for shortly afterwards, during the rounding up of Alsatian

plotters with Germany, the Abbé's house was searched and papers discovered proving that he was in correspondence with the plotters.

At the end of his article Mr. Ward sums up the "reasons for the condemnation of the *Action Française.*" They are as follows, although in Mr. Ward's article they are not numbered, and readers of THE ENGLISH REVIEW will be able to judge of their sufficiency. The reasons given by Mr. Ward are:

(i) It "has adopted a policy of 'alliance' with the Catholic Royalists," instead of its former policy, which Mr. Ward states to have been "openly anti-Christian."

Apart from the error of fact, the objection is a strange one for a defender of the Vatican to take.

(ii) Its "expressions of anti-Christian philosophy have been less frequent"; but "the conclusions of that philosophy have in consequence gone unchallenged by its Catholic followers."

This is also a somewhat strange objection.

(iii) The "assumption that the words Catholic and Royalist mean the same thing."

Even if this were true, it would afford no ground for putting the *Action Française* on the Index.

(iv) The "frequent opposition to works of social betterment under a regime declared illegitimate."

(v) "A gospel of unrestrained nationalism."

In this sentence the true reason comes out. The offence of the *Action Française,* in the view of those now in control at the Vatican, is its devoted patriotism.

(vi) "An externalized and political conception of the Church."

These things, according to Mr. Ward, "were weakening the religion of thousands of Catholic young men"; although, why strong nationalism, or the alleged opposition to works of social betterment should weaken religion is not explained. If so skilled a controversialist as Mr. Ward can bring forward no stronger reasons (or excuses) than these for the violence displayed by the Vatican towards *Action Française,* is it not manifest that the case for the Vatican is indeed weak, and that the reason given in my previous article for its action is correct?

The Oxford English Dictionary: 1884–1928*

By Vernon Rendall

THE completion of the incomparable Oxford Dictionary of English, after more than forty years of resolute labour, deserves "the quirks of blazoning pens" better than a dozen leading politicians and a hundred of the best books duly proclaimed immortal by a hundred casual judgments. For here is the heart and mind of the English people, the clue to that baffling character which has been often exhibited in rash generalizations and seldom understood. Since Emerson's "English Traits," a notable book in its way, few have tried to penetrate into the English mind; and the last investigator, when he dealt with the English language, did not perceive its secure and irrefragable evidence concerning the mass of national thought. Our language is the result of a vast but silent referendum, which brings out, rejects and preserves, sometimes for an ephemeral existence, sometimes for lasting use, the words and phrases which present its typical thoughts and, where English has to borrow, its typical inhibitions.

Haeckel once declared that the English character was due to beefsteak. Perhaps it has led to some of the English stolidity. "I am a great eater of beef and I believe that does harm to my wit," says Sir Andrew Aguecheek in "Twelfth Night." However that may be, the English have long been great meat-eaters; and the language shows it, for "meat," which once meant food, as in "sweetmeat," is now confined in usage to the flesh of animals. Their self-sufficiency and bluntness do not make them popular abroad, but the whole world is taking on their zeal for sport, which is strongly marked in the language. The highest compliment that an ordinary Englishman can pay to the highest in the land is that they are "good

* Oxford University Press.

sports." "Not cricket" is their way of recording their objection to taking an unfair advantage. They fight like heroes and never talk of "patriotism" or "glory," preferring to take the game-cock as a symbol of stubborn resistance. As Emerson remarks:

> Their looks bespeak an invincible stoutness: they have extreme difficulty to run away, and will die game.

With their physical qualities of independence and "invincible stoutness" alone, the English would not be a great and enduring nation. They have also—and some war-weary pessimists seem inclined to forget it—gained the highest distinction in literature and scientific discovery. Their poetry is a monument which can challenge comparison with any, ancient or modern; and of all poetic geniuses Shakespeare today enjoys the most universal fame. Among all the writers and thinkers of the nineteenth century, Darwin stands out as the most penetrating influence. Since he wrote, the world of thought has changed incalculably. He has a wider following than Luther or Napoleon or Mahomet secured in their day.

But with all this splendid achievement the English go on as if they were unaware of it. They ignore the treasures of their own tongue, deride their poets, and will not take the trouble to understand their philosophers. They seem to have reached a point of inertness in language when it is easier to borrow from others than to use one's own resources. The great creative period of the Elizabethans added immensely to English faculties of expression, but no such impulse has vivified the language since; and where good old words might be used to advantage, both by poets and men of business, they are forgotten and new and inferior formations take their place. The immense growth of journalism has led to a slipshod style which few find it worth while to denounce, and it is a novelty to find the latest *Journal* of the Institute of Journalists showing some doubt about the reckless coining of new words. I went some years since into the reference room of a great newspaper. There lay the dictionaries and other aids to decently accurate writing, deep in dust. The place was a limbo of the forgotten.

clearly unknown alike to charwomen and sub-editors. Thus do the English who pretend to teach us ignore all the teaching that patient scholars have laid before them ready for use.

In the earlier part of the nineteenth century, it must be confessed, English scholars did little to improve on Johnson and left the glorious heritage of English words to look after itself, so that the Dictionary of Noah Webster, a notorious opponent of English usage, became the usual standby of the intelligent reader or writer. This was a pause in philological scholarship, which had previously made a steady advance. Johnson did not make all his dictionary out of his own head; he relied largely on Bailey. The succession of dictionary-makers before Bailey may be discovered in Hawkins's "Life of Johnson," or in an Oxford lecture by the first great editor of the Oxford Dictionary, Sir James Murray.* The beginnings of lexicography are lists of words not easily understood with foreign equivalents. The early collectors include Edward Phillips, the nephew and pupil of Milton, whose "New World of Words" was far from new, since it was largely cribbed from a contemporary. Johnson's achievement was wonderful for the time, but he was indifferent in some ways and could not profit by the comparative study of the Indo-European languages familiar today. His great merit was his fine selection of passages from poetry and prose of high rank. But neither he nor Webster attempted or thought of the wonderful parade of words presented in the Oxford Dictionary, a record "not of our English, but of all English," as a special number of the Oxford University Press paper well puts it.† In this immense collection of words "the English of Chaucer, and of the Bible, and of Shakespeare is unfolded . . . with the same wealth of illustration as is devoted to the most modern authors." The *Periodical* tells us that from first to last the editors and their assistants were little short of fifty. It is full of details grave and gay, but has only hinted at the conversation invented some while since

* "The Evolution of English Lexicography." By James A. H. Murray. Romanes Lecture. 1900. The Clarendon Press. 2s.

† The *Periodical*. Vol. xiii, No. 143. "The Oxford English Dictionary Completed."

between the ghosts of the great lexicographer and his assiduous parasite.

Boswell: What would you say, sir, if you heard that your Dictionary had been superseded by a Scot and a Nonconformist working at Oxford?

Johnson: Sir, to be facetious it is not necessary to be indecent.

The Oxford Dictionary is full of surprises and discoveries. A word can be followed down the centuries. Its often amazing derivation is established by the first quotation. Then it can be seen changing its colour, sometimes enlarged in meaning and sometimes restricted, getting into fashion or getting degraded, and later, perhaps, restored to favour. Dryden, in his translation of the "Æneid," would not admit "sweet-marjoram" as the material for a couch arranged by Venus, because "those village words, as I may call them, give us a mean idea of the thing." Yet Shakespeare could write:

Buds of marjoram had stolen her hair,

and modern authors of good taste are not afraid of the word.

The reason for the disuse of some words is difficult to discover. The verb "do" with the addition of "out," "up," "off," and "on" makes the short, easy verbs "dout," "dup," "doff," and "don." All of these are in Shakespeare. Why has every one of them disappeared from common speech to be replaced by two words or longer forms? For inquiry into such questions and the sort of word-study known as semantics, scholars can now rely on the infinite resources of the dictionary. These represent a terrific amount of detail, the material being provided by the unremunerated labours of a large array of volunteer readers. Pigeon-holes containing as many as 60,000 slips were required for even one of the minor letters of the alphabet. The arrangement and definition of words alone might have daunted the most industrious of editors. I think I remember being told by Sir James Murray that he spent three weeks over the arrangement of "to." He worked from 1882 till 1915, and his successor, Henry Bradley, had helped in the Dictionary as early as the letter B. Bradley was the greatest English scholar of his day, and when it was proposed to spoil the Dictionary by restrictions of space,

it was his protest that saved it. For many years Furnivall was one of the most active supporters, and the only objection to his work was that his reading was rather in the *Daily News* than in "lords of language" like Tennyson. Literature should come above journalism, and it is no disparagement of the immense range and careful work of the Dictionary to say that its instances are occasionally capable of improvement. Thus, under "vermilion," suitable additions to the later record of the word would be "the mullet's red vermilion" from the "Earthly Paradise" ("The Story of Rhodope") and Ruskin's playful description of the Communist opinions of some of his school as "the vermilion or Tyrian-red section of us" ("Fors Clavigera," Letter 7). Under "heaven-sent" Trollope's derisive application of the adjective to the writers of the "Jupiter" (the *Times*) in "The Warden" would fill a gap; while the Signora Neroni's playful remark in "Barchester Towers," "Dread thoughts of strychnine did pass across my brain," would enliven the arid examples of the poison supplied from science. Sometimes, a foreign use of English might have been worth noting. Thus Balzac writes in "La Maison Nucingen": "Grâce à *l'improper*, on trouvera quelque jour Londres et ses habitants petrifiés," which gives a good idea of the effect of English prudery on our livelier neighbours. "Tout savant est un peu cadavre," as the French say. The Oxford Dictionary has got over any such imputations by calling in a number of experts on subjects which even the greatest of lexicographers have not the time, or the desire, to master. The advance of science, a leading source of new words which the purist views with mixed feelings, is thoroughly represented.

Few would read through a dictionary today, and Browning, who did it, was led to use some odd words and muddle them. But there is nothing so interesting to browse in and make discoveries. Who would not look for the Forget-me-not across the centuries as a constant and well-established name for the *Myosotis*? As a matter of fact, there is a gap in the quotations for it between 1532 and 1817. It is not Shakespeare's flower-symbol of remembrance, and its modern vogue is in all likelihood a piece of sentiment imported from the

Continent. Coleridge, reintroducing it in his "Sibylline Leaves," thinks it well to add a footnote that the name "Forget-me-not" is in use all over Germany and in Sweden and Denmark. One of the surprises is the number of words a well-read man has never seen or heard before. Thus there are eight words under the headings "roil" and "steven," and no one of them is familiar today. More important, perhaps, is the reminder of fine words like "ruth," which have disappeared from current usage and might be revived by poets.

"Vogue words" have their day, but it is often brief. Bradley included with some doubt "Strafe," which the war brought in as ridicule of the enemy's "Delenda est Anglia." It may well "go west," like the Boer words which for a while attained a familiar currency during the South African war. Only one word well established today is known to me as invented by a living man. It is "spoof," due to the comedian Mr. Arthur Roberts. The adjective "Limehouse," due to Mr. Lloyd George's ideas of popular appeal in that district, is already fading.

The queerest of all words are those supposed to be due to mistakes. Such are "syllabus," due to a misreading or MS. corruption of a word in Cicero's "Letters"; "gravy," supposed to be a miswriting of "grany"; and "tweed" cloth, a trade-name originating in an accidental misreading of "tweel," a Scottish form of "twill." A lazy people in their pronunciation, the English have thus retarded the spread of their language over the whole world. They do not take the trouble to speak clearly; they mumble so that no foreigner can readily understand them. Many words today lack a standard pronunciation, as various people of competent education give them with different sounds. If there are any rules about English usage, they are commonly ignored, though it is safe to conclude that the way which gives the least trouble to speakers will be adopted by a majority of them. Yielding to this laziness, the English have mixed up many words. Thus, "strait" and "straight" have been often spelt in the same way and are now widely confused. The "strait gate" of Matthew vii. 13, has been naturally supposed to be a straight, direct path to heaven, divergence from which as in the imagery seen in the word

"transgress," leads to destruction. Together the two words occupy more than six closely printed pages. Looking between them at "straightener," I miss the official in "Erewhon." Perhaps he may be added later, since Butler's repute has become much greater than it was.

In view of the work and expense it has involved, the Dictionary is remarkably cheap, sold at less than a penny a page. But its height is well above that of the ordinary shelf, which may have been against it. The many who live in close quarters can hardly, perhaps, find room for its row of volumes, but every self-respecting institution should possess it. Now that it is completed, a summary of its main results may be hoped for in two portable volumes. The "Concise Oxford Dictionary" has found a place on many a desk, but it was completed before the end of the great work behind it was available. The "Pocket Oxford Dictionary" is also useful; but something on a larger scale than both would be a great boon to readers and writers. Such a book might lead to an improvement in the language of politicians and journalists, a reduction of needless vulgarities and mistakes about English printed year after year by those who are too idle to make any research. The English language is a wonderful but difficult instrument which can be played on like a violin. Who plays the violin in public without learning how to do it? How many venture to blunder along in what they presume to be English!

For the honourable minority who love the English language this incomparable Dictionary needs no commendation. Indeed, it might recall the words of Bolingbroke:

> I approve the devotion of a studious man at Christ Church, who was overheard in his oratory entering into a detail with God, and acknowledging the divine goodness in furnishing the world with makers of dictionaries.

Or, going back earlier, one may think of Socrates,* who in his brief hour of respite before death found time to explain to his friend: "Dear Crito, you must know that to use words wrongly is not only a fault in itself; it also creates evil in the soul."

* Plato, "Phædo." 115e.

A Pair of Boots

By D. M. Thornton

I HAD never thought of Marsden as a man who took much interest in his clothes; and for the matter of that I don't know that I think so now. I realize since my last visit to him that he is capable of appreciating perfection when he sees it, in that line as in several others; but that is not the same thing. A man may read Shakespeare's sonnets and catch himself wondering whether the language in which they are written can be the same that we murder every day; and yet go on for most of his life reading no poetry, and only second-rate prose. He may dine, in a suitably awed frame of mind, at the "Kleinehaus" in Vienna, and yet get a reasonable amount of the enjoyment which, we are told, is necessary for the proper digestion of our food, out of the meals served to him by an average English cook.

So with Marsden and his boots; but I must get on to his story. I hadn't known him long when I went to spend a weekend at his house in the country. Mrs. Marsden and his daughters were out when I arrived. We had tea together in his study, and were soon up to our necks in an enthralling discussion, the nature of which doesn't matter. The sense of time retreated obsequiously to a suitable background, but for some reason the sound of the stable clock striking seven penetrated Marsden's consciousness.

"By Jove! I must go and dress," he said. "We've got this confounded dinner-party tonight, and I promised my wife that I'd be ready early and discuss with her who's to sit next who. You needn't dress yet; come with me to my room, and we can go on talking."

I went gladly enough, and for some time I couldn't be said to notice anything in the room. But when Marsden got as far as the tying of his tie his flow of words slackened, and I have enough sense of the fitness of things not to impose argument on a man struggling with that task.

I looked around; the room was quite ordinary but for one thing—the arrangement of Marsden's boots and shoes. The main supply rested tidily enough on a long shelf, raised just above the ground, under the window. But one pair of boots stood by itself, on a small shelf just large enough to hold them, above the middle of the others.

"Why," I said idly, "didn't you have the top shelf made longer whilst you were about it? You may want room for another pair some day; and there is only room for that one pair on the top shelf."

"No other pair of boots or shoes will ever stand on any shelf with those," said Marsden. "Look at them—if you've an eye for such things."

I took them in my hand, and examined them. "My word, they are—well, as far as one can see, they're perfection! Do they fit?"

"Fit? Will our haloes fit, if and when we get them? I'll tell you one thing—if I thought, with the ancients, that I could take any material possessions with me to the other world, I'd be buried wearing them; in that way I should feel certain of being, in one small particular, suitably prepared."

"Who made them?"

"The man who made nearly all the others. He's dead now, by the way."

I looked at the others. There was not a pair amongst them that began to be worthy to stand by the first pair I had looked at. The top shelf, as a symbol, was well justified.

"There's a story to it," said Marsden. "Tonight, when this tomfoolery is over, I'll tell it to you. Remind me."

And when I did remind him of his promise this is what he told me.

. . . . . .

The man who made those boots was called Butters. He lived in the High Street, at Loddington, which, as you may or may not know, is our market town. His father had the shop before him, and his grandfather before that.

It is a small shop, with those rounded, bellied-out

windows. Inside, it is rather dark in the front part, which looks out on the High Street; but at the back—it is a long room which runs all the length of the ground floor—there is a large window from which you see into a backyard. It is in this part of the room that the work of making and repairing boots and shoes was—and for the matter of that, I suppose, is still—done; for Butters's son has succeeded him.

For me it is always springtime in that backyard; and when I think of it, I am a child again who has been brought to the shop to have a pair of boots fitted. On such a day—it happened once perhaps; but you know how a strong impression received in childhood gives, in looking back, the feeling that it happened often—I saw the pear tree that grew in the backyard in the full glory of its springtime clothing. For me there has never been any comparison possible in the beauty of flowering fruit trees; the pear tree is beyond question the most lovely. There is a poise about its whole growth—a suggestion of iridescence about the blossom; I hope no tree in any other world will go trying to be more exquisite.

Behind the tree there is a high wall of small red bricks, very old; and behind that again you can see the grey church tower, and the chimney stacks of some works which lie just outside Loddington.

The whole place—the shop, I mean—seemed made to be the birthplace of the perfect boot; but, as a matter of fact, Butters's boots often left much to be desired. But I always went to him; custom, perhaps; and laziness a good deal. And they weren't bad, only not really good. After I married, my wife used to try to get me to go to a man in Bond Street whom her people always went to; but—well, by that time I was fond of Butters in a sort of way and didn't want to make a change.

He was a small man, rather stout; butter-coloured hair, appropriately enough, with a fair skin that used to get very red, purple almost, when it was at all hot. His wife was stoutish too; she gave the effect of tightness in everything about her, face and clothes and mind. She was immensely energetic, almost ecstatically practical, and much to the fore in all good works—a personage in her way.

Much more so than Butters, who only succeeded in being—well, just Butters; a maker of just not good boots; but lovable, in some way, all the same. Perhaps it was that he had a rather special brand of humour; not that he ever said anything particularly amusing, but you felt somehow that he might at any minute.

About two years ago I went to Italy for a long holiday. I took my eldest boy with me; my wife and the other children stayed here. It was whilst I was away that Butters met with a bad accident. He was walking blamelessly enough down a small street near the High Street, when a plank fell on his head. Some workmen were putting up a scaffolding before the front of a shop that they were repairing, and, with what seems to have been inexplicable carelessness, they let this plank fall on poor Butters's head.

He was carried back to his home, which was over his shop, and lay for a long time unconscious. At first the doctor despaired of his life; but at last he regained consciousness, and after a long convalescence he seems to have more or less recovered.

My wife, of course, told me of this accident when writing to me, and let me know, in her subsequent letters, of his recovery; so that it was a shock to hear, on the day I came back, that he had died, and his funeral had taken place on the day of my return. I gathered that it was quite sudden; my wife said she had seen him only a day or two before his death, and that he had seemed much as usual, only very quiet, as he had been ever since his accident. She supposed that his recovery had not been as complete as had been thought.

It took me some time to go through the mass of correspondence which it had not been thought necessary to send on to me, and it was not until I had nearly got through this job that I found a parcel and a letter from Butters. The parcel contained a pair of boots; the pair of boots that you saw in my room, on the upper shelf. I was surprised to find them, as I was sure that I had not ordered any before going away; and the letter didn't altogether explain things. It was written on a piece of Butters's bill paper, in his usual painstaking rounded handwriting, but with something rather shaky about it,

as if he had suddenly got much older, and it ran as follows:

> Dear sir,—I have taken the liberty of making you a pair of boots. From what I hear of the Italian roads, and you doing a lot of walking, you will be wanting a new pair. I have taken the liberty of charging four guineas, instead of three, as usual; the leather is extra good, and they are altogether a superior class of article.—Yours respectfully, H. BUTTERS.

Then a postscript, written in a firmer handwriting than the rest: "They will not require any alteration."

He was right. They fitted exquisitely, and I was conscious that, for the first time in my life, I was in the possession of a superlatively well-made pair of boots.

Next day I went to see Mrs. Butters.

She received me in the upstairs sitting-room, which was rather stuffy and in which the faint smell of leather which always pervaded the whole house was mingled with what I took to be the fragrance of rich cake and sherry. She seemed in some way less tight than before. Her new black clothes were looser—perhaps her old ones had been relics of a slimmer age—and the expression of her face—poor Mrs. Butters—had something less rigidly certain about it. I condoled with her as best I could, and, after I had got up to go, I rather tentatively mentioned the last pair of boots.

"That was a wonderful pair of boots your poor husband made for me," I said; "that last pair. I found them when I got back."

Mrs. Butters started. "Boots, sir?" she said. "I didn't know that you'd left any order for any boots."

"Well," I said, beginning to wish that I had never spoken of them, "I didn't exactly. But Mr. Butters seemed to have thought that I should be wanting a pair when I got back . . . rough roads, you know, in Italy; so he sent up a pair. Very thoughtful of him."

"Then that was what he was doing," murmured Mrs. Butters, more to herself than to me. "Sit down, sir, if you can spare a minute or two more. I should like to talk to you a bit about it."

I sat down, and she began again.

"I was puzzled in a sort of way all along; but I don't much believe in wondering about what you can't see

plain right off. He wasn't never what you could call really all right, wasn't Butters; not really, after that accident. So quiet he was—not like himself. At first, after he come to, he lay as still as a new-born babe. But as soon as ever he'd got a little strength he began worrying to have his tools and make some boots. He wasn't up to it, sir, and there wasn't no need—no need whatever. Loftons' —that was the firm, sir, what those men were working for, what let the plank fall on his poor head—promised to behave handsomely. They've paid up now—a tidy sum of money—and no more than right that they should. Well, and we've been putting by for a long time; so as far as money went, there was no need for him to think of work, not never no more if he didn't feel like it. My son was working here when the accident happened; and he was finishing off all the orders we had in hand. And there weren't any fresh ones, not for the gentry's class of goods, which is all that Butters had done for a long time. People had heard of what had happened, I suppose, and perhaps they didn't know that Tom was just as good as his father. Anyhow, no orders of that sort came in; and we didn't worry. There ain't never so many in the summer months anyhow; and there was time enough to see about getting things going when he was about again and we could see how things were shaping.

"And there he was worrying to have his tools, for me to let him go down to the workshop . . . he that wasn't never so over keen on work, either. Not lazy, I don't mean; but he'd never sniffed at a holiday before, in all the years I've known him.

"Well, at first I wouldn't hear of it, and I told him so. 'Stay quiet,' I said. 'You're as weak as a kitten yet. Stay quiet, and stop worrying me.'

"He did after that for a day or so; but then he began again. And I spoke out sharp to him, God forgive me!

"He sat there so—well—sort of grieved, all the morning; and after dinner I thought perhaps it was better to humour him, so I says to him, 'Well,' I says, 'if you can't be happy any other way, go down to the shop and see what there is to do.'

"He looked that pleased, and he said, 'I'm sorry, old girl . . . but you see, I must get to work. It's—it's a sort of order as I sees it.'

"'An order?' I says; 'the orders for your sort of work is all finished and sent off.'

"But he went down, without saying any more, and next day I was sorry I let him go. I knew how 'twould be. Once I'd let him go downstairs, I shouldn't be able to manage him no more. Well, nothing would please him but he must go off to London to see for some leather. There was nothing in the workshop that he'd look at. He seemed so set on it that he had to go, but he wasn't fit for it. It makes a long day, as you know, sir—two hours in the train both ways—and he not out of his bed more than a week. He came back more dead than alive; but I didn't say much. And next day I felt better about it; he seemed so pleased to be working again; and I thought perhaps it was for the best, after all. He seemed as content as a little king, sitting and working there so quiet. They must have been your boots he was working on. I never saw them, or spoke to him about them. I wasn't best pleased about it, even then; so I just took no notice of what he was doing.

"He went out the afternoon before he died, just as I was laying tea, with a parcel under his arm, and came back into the sitting-room when I was pouring out their second cups.

"'I feel tired, mother,' he said. 'I don't want no tea. I'll go up and have a lie down.'

"I didn't say nothing, for I didn't want for him to think as I was vexed with him over the work; which I wasn't . . . only I thought it foolishness—which it was, of course.

"I went up later and took him a bit of supper, and made him take off his clothes and get into bed, proper. He didn't eat much; he seemed tired out, but quite pleased and happy. He went off to sleep, and didn't wake up no more that night; and in the morning when he woke . . . when I woke, that is; he was dead."

I uttered some platitude about the shock it must have been to her; but absentmindedly, I'm afraid, for I was thinking hard.

Something that had been at the back of my mind ever since I got the boots was pushing itself to the front.

Suddenly I knew clearly what it was.

Whilst I was in Italy I had become conscious of a rather painful enlargement of one of the joints in my left foot. It had been coming on for some time, but it was only then that I decided finally that when I ordered my next pair of boots, I should have to mention it to Butters, and have him alter my last. A touch of gout, perhaps, or just pure *anno Domini*.

But those new boots had allowed for it; how in the name of goodness . . . ?

I said good-bye to Mrs. Butters, and went downstairs. There is a little door that leads straight from the back of the passage into the working part of the shop; I went through it, and found Tom Butters at work.

I talked to him a bit about things, and then said, "I wonder, if you don't mind, would you let me see my last? The left foot is the one I want."

He looked rather surprised, but he went and fetched it.

I stood waiting for him, looking out at the pear-tree the while. Its leaves were turning to gold, and it was covered with bronze fruit. It had done well that year.

Tom Butters gave me the last. Just where the joint was enlarged, there was a piece of leather carefully shaped and fastened down, to amend it.

"I suppose," I said hesitatingly, "no one but your father had anything to do with this?"

"Why, no, sir. He never let no one touch the lasts of the gentlemen he made for, father didn't. I fetched it from where he hung it up, that last evening, the evening before he died."

. . . . . .

Marsden stopped speaking, and knocked out his pipe on the hob. "Well, what do you make of it?" he said. "Was his return to life something in the nature of a reprieve—a reprieve to give him a chance to do his special job for once really well; to do up to the full of his powers something that for most of his life he had only half done? Or does that seem to you too fanciful? Anyhow, you have heard my story, and you've seen the 'superior class of article' . . . you must draw your own conclusions."

Sarawak Scenes

By Theodore Ruete

SOFT the balmy breezes and blue the cloudless tropical sky sweeping over the "tanker" in the Miri roadstead to the low line of palms some three miles landwards. Blue, too, the sea—with little curls of foam, and of such transparency that from the ship's side it is possible to follow for a time all the movements of a diver down below.

The diver soon sinks to the ocean-bed, where he connects a length of flexible 9-in. hose, attached to the vessel's pumps, with one of the submarine pipe-lines supplying the oil from the mainland. Mineral oil in paying quantities was discovered in this part of Sarawak some years ago, but its value was largely neutralized by reason of the fact that the coast-line could not show a single practicable harbour. But today, thanks to these pipe-lines, ships can load quickly, with a minimum of trouble and delay, at a safe distance from shore.

When it was learned that Sarawak, in common with the rest of Borneo, was possessed of petroleum in plenty, greater attention was at once paid to this lovely lotus-land of the Eastern archipelago, where a British Rajah is absolute lord. The reigning ruler, the third of the line, is descended from the adventurous sailor, Sir James Brooke, who between the years 1838 and 1841 effectually subdued Borneo's pitiless pirates. Later, he received permission from the Sultan of the northern portion of this vast island, which is virtually a continent, to establish himself permanently in its north-west corner. His dominions, since enlarged by his successors to an area now about as great as England and Wales combined, certainly may not make war or enter into treaties without the consent of Great Britain; but in all other respects they successfully maintain absolute independence.

On landing in Sarawak, one feels that the story of "the Garden of Eden" was true after all, and that here was its place. The warm, moist air is heavy with the fragrant odours of a riotous vegetation; and brilliantly-coloured birds flash across sun-splashed glades, where here and there the bright blooms of bush or tree flame

out from the vivid green. Above all, a good-natured tranquillity seems the principal characteristic of the indolent, smiling, brown-skinned natives.

Only one generation ago, however, many tribes in the mountainous interior, and on the less-frequented stretches of the much-indented coasts, were persistent head-hunters; and several little wars, or expeditions against them, were necessary before the whole land was finally subdued. Among these head-hunters, otherwise quite agreeable folk, no youth was deemed to have reached man's estate till he could show one or more heads hacked from his countrymen's shoulders. Often enough, the young men were driven to their deeds of blood by the mocking jeers of the maidens they desired. How these heads were obtained seemed to matter little; probably they were generally got by ambush, rather than in open combat; and anyone, friend or foe, was liable to be set upon if only his head seemed easily obtainable.

The present native of Sarawak is, however, by no means deficient in physical courage. At a village where I halted when travelling up-country, two men were brought in to the local magistrate to be tried for the offence of duelling. Both these beauties—one of whom wore a look of anxious, pathetic bewilderment, while the other scowled ferociously—were arrayed in coats of mail of toughened goat-skin, sewn all over with the strong, elastic tail-quills of the great black-and-white, savage-looking hornbill bird. This remarkably effective armour covered their bodies before and behind, a large mother-of-pearl shell (to break assaults on chest or lungs) being sewn immediately below the butterfly-shaped gap left for insertion of the head.

The long, lean commissioner, learned in native lore, to whom I had a kindly introduction, informed me later that in these affairs—which, although forbidden by law, still take place occasionally—the fight takes place either with daggers or with swords at once convex and concave. The whetstones always carried at the native's girdle for sharpening his weapons were in evidence at this trial—as were, too, the goat-hide shields. Real locks of human hair profusely adorned these last—strongly incriminating evidence that procured heavy sentences for the duellists.

"I imagine," observed my host that evening, handing

me one of the blow-pipe darts without a quiverful of which no native of Sarawak ever stirs abroad, "you will hardly believe that these feathered trifles are really far more dangerous than all the other weapons. But they are tipped, you see, with a kind of strychnine, obtained from the roots of certain plants, and when shot from a blow-pipe are truly deadly. Any animate being struck with one," continued the magistrate, "dies almost instantly. The poison, however, only affects the heart, apparently; for if the spot round where the arrow entered is at once cut out, as is invariably done, the rest of the flesh can be consumed with absolute impunity."

The slender blow-pipe and its wicked little barbs are absolutely essential to the natives, for owing to the dense forests and jungle covering most of Sarawak, even they would find it hard to approach their plentiful wild pig near enough to use their *tapang*-handled spears or locally-made daggers; and the firearms they sometimes carry are merely clumsy old muzzle-loaders. When casting bullets for these blunderbusses, the native partially melts down the great leaden ball which once upon a time brought him unexpected good fortune, and which he invariably carries in the bamboo tube of personal treasures slung around his waist. He then carefully incorporates small pieces of it in all his new pellets—how else, indeed, can he ensure that they also shall fly true?

Besides the necessities of the chase, the natives of Sarawak also carry with them on the march practically all their simple belongings—in two great bunches, slung one on each side of their waist. For families are always moving here, ever roving on to pastures new. A dear old lady in a village near Kapit once confidingly showed me the contents of one of these family travelling tubes, in which, amongst other charms, were a few precious Lukut-Sakala beads. Nowadays these baubles are not so plentiful as formerly; but they are still unearthed at rare intervals, being generally discovered near ancient burying-grounds. They are highly treasured, and are passed on like family heirlooms from one generation to another.

A downpour of tropical rain, blotting out river, earth, and sky, made impossible our further journey to Kapit that afternoon, and thus we came to quarter ourselves until the following day upon our native hosts.

As the shadows lengthened, we gathered around the family *dulang* (wooden tray) to share with the others the day's principal meal. Most of the natives squatted on their hams, but for me there was reserved a low, neatly-carved stool of *tapang*—the wood from which are made the *dulangs*, elaborate canoe-paddles, and other necessary domestic implements. When the meal was ready, each person helped himself with his fingers to a ball of the glutinous rice heaped in the centre of the wide, shallow, wooden platter. By its aid he then scooped up some of the wild pig, or deer meat, fish, oils, herbs, etc., placed in four other much smaller platters which formed a single piece with the centre one, around which they were grouped.

All our company were hungry, so we went at this serious business vigorously, till the trencher was not only empty but also thoroughly scoured out. Then a clean, beautifully-woven rattan mat was unrolled on the floor behind a quickly-strung curtain; and on my being handed a pillow and cotton blanket, native dyed and woven, I gathered that it was intended, even thus early in the evening, that I should make myself comfortable for the night. In the larger villages, or towns, bedsteads would, of course, have been available—of bamboo, wood, or iron. But in this languorous land the velvet nights are generally stifling, and both natives and Europeans sleep not in, but *on*, their couches—covered only, if at all, by a quilt or blanket of intricate symbolical pattern.

In the day-time, too, Sarawak's soft, seductive climate renders clothing quite superfluous, except for decency or vanity. Thus, a small waist-cloth mostly suffices for the men, though on State occasions they sport a petticoat of "Manchester," or a silk *sarong*, heavily embroidered in gold or silver thread, together with a sleeveless cotton coatee—native-made, from staple locally grown, spun and woven. Below their waists, the women wear similar cloths, but above these their bodies are often encased in corsets of spirally-wound rattans, bound about with copper wire. Sun or rain are alike accepted with equanimity by either sex, though they shelter themselves from both to a certain extent under immense, umbrella-like hats of coloured, plaited palm-leaf fibre.

What little decorative art there is in Sarawak shows

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strongly-marked Hindoo and Chinese influences, particularly the latter. This is hardly to be wondered at, since the Celestials, although loftily despised by the independent, lazy Malays, reign supreme in every sort of occupation throughout the length and breadth of Indonesia. To them belong most of the factories producing sago—the chief food hereabouts—and many of the tobacco plantations, on which much of the labour employed is also supplied by their own countrymen.

Nothing is so abhorrent to most Malays as practical, regular toil, and at rapt contemplation they would be very hard to beat. Their voluptuous land—justly styled "the paradise of naturalists," from the beauty and peculiarity of its many plants and flowers, and the great variety of its birds and animals—does not demand of anyone that he should work to live. Of all places on earth, here can one exist, if that is all one asks, and yet do absolutely nothing. Clothes and shelter are almost unnecessary, and food is always to be had practically for the taking. Yams, beans, bananas, coco-nuts, peppers, tapioca-root flourish luxuriantly without the slightest cultivation; while the rivers, creeks, and seas swarm with edible fish, which consequently form a large part of the diet of all Sarawak folk.

Everywhere, indeed, fishing is actually one of the natives' main occupations. The waters of the huge inland sea around the islands of Borneo, Sumatra, Java, up and down the Malay coast and round the shores of Indo-China and Siam, form what is really the world's largest fishing-ground—nowhere deeper, moreover, than one hundred fathoms. It is enormously rich, and has, of course, been worked to a certain extent for centuries by the ubiquitous Chinese and by the scanty populations of the immediate districts. So far, however, it has merely been scratched, so to speak, and a rich harvest awaits the white man who will introduce modern, organized methods.

An unusual method of taking fish, typical of the people's laziness, yet practical and astonishing in its simplicity, is by means of cleverly-constructed mazes, fashioned of stakes placed closely together, in channels where fish are plentiful. On entering such a maze, the fish soon discover that its winding passages admit of progress in one direction only—forwards. Thus they

come at last to the well of the trap, where there is no escape from the native, who climbs down into it and simply picks them out. By this means, our work-shy friends not only always have fish at their command, but manage to keep it sweet and fresh till wanted.

In addition to these fish-mazes, and to the bottle-shaped, wicker fish-traps in use by coloured races more or less all over the globe, nets are much employed by the Sarawak folk. They are of several kinds, and are used in various ways, according to the locality. Some of them are wide casting-nets, thrown by hand in very shallow waters near the shore; others are bag- and draw-nets, with floats, to be let down in deep water farther out. A strange contrivance, for use in parts midway between the two, is the "leaf." This is a huge, bulging, flat mat formed of split rattans, and suspended by ropes at each corner from high poles. The natives go out to it in boats, and raise or lower it according to the state of the tide, scooping out any fish that may have got entangled within its shallow depths.

On my return to the coast from the interior, a bland old Chinaman, with whom I had scraped acquaintance, offered one day to take me fishing. Besides purchasing the whole catch, the industrious people from the Middle Kingdom sometimes engage in the actual fishing themselves—going out on the boats of the Malays to superintend the process. The many images and mascots stuck up all over our vessel must have brought us luck that day, for we got a splendid haul in a very short time. The boat, like many of the larger ones, was built with a well to receive the catch. "John" personally saw to the proper stowing of this, busily mingling with it blocks of ice to keep the fish sweet and cool till they could be safely packed.

When the boats reached land, the sleepy, sunlit shore suddenly became galvanized into activity. Laughing, chattering brown women and girls, naked from the waist upwards, their loins merely girt with a cloth of some bright colour, seized, split, and gutted the fish on the sands, while others salted them heavily in brine. Former catches, spread out close by, were drying on large trays of rattan. Those already cured were being tightly packed in baskets by a group of girls, who were pounding down the fish with their bare feet.

My presence was ignored by all. For the moment, these folk were actually busy! They seemed happy and contented, too; sure of themselves and of their place in the scheme of things—truly a satisfying scene.

Suddenly a number of lithe, brown boys scuttled across the beach with armfuls of fish to be cooked for the family's livestock, feathered and four-footed, before the catch was salted, for both the Chinese and Malays greatly relish pigs and ducks, and keep large numbers of them. The village birds, however, seemed unable to wait until the little furnaces should duly discharge their provender, but came flocking noisily to the shore, there to grab all they could, uncooked.

The domestic architecture of the people is of the most primitive description—hardly removed from that of the Swiss lake-dwellers. Like them, many families live huddled together in long, frail-looking communal huts, built on a platform upon piles and reached by a crazy ladder. If at all possible, these platforms abut over creeks or streams, and the styes of the Sarawak domesticated pigs are usually built in the same manner. A group, more or less large, of several of these communal houses forms the only village Sarawak knows. Before them often grow some huge *tapang* trees. As a rule, these rise seventy feet and more before branching, and are frequently loaded with a dozen or so of the swinging nests of the plentiful wild bees.

These nests, by the way, are an almost certain means of bringing the people into their country's law courts. Excitement of some sort seems necessary to the Malays. Head-hunting has been put down, and duels; the people have little work to claim them, or keep them healthily occupied; and so they are constantly working up feuds over possession of these nests.

The bees favour the same trees year after year, and in time their nests come to be regarded as the private property of certain families. One day, when the grubs are ripe—for it is these, and not the honey or wax, that are so coveted—some roystering adventurer, with no sanctioned claim, swings himself aloft, and crawls perilously out to a swinging nest. Reaching down to it from the limb, he breaks it open, regardless of stings, and starts feasting upon its grubs as if they were candies. The

nest-owners then rush to the assault; the lad's friends rally round him; and what follows generally beggars description. For the climate is not inducive to cool, sluggish blood, and the Malay was ever a fighter! Often there is a sanguinary scene, and the least that happens is that one party hales the other to court.

To the attentive observer of Nature, Sarawak resembles the Garden of Eden, not only in its climate, flowers, and vegetation, and its happy, indolent inhabitants, but also in its plenteous survivals of early types of birds and animals. Many of these last are natural gliders, and Sarawak has an impressive page to show in the great book of evolution. Most folk have heard of a flying squirrel. But how about a flying lemur, the female of which can glide from tree to tree with her young clinging to her breast? And what shall we say of a flying dragon, a flying frog, and two kinds of flying snakes? Have you ever watched a "sailing spider" travel through the air on its own floating thread, till this catches upon some leaf or twig, enabling the insect to climb aloft again? Yet all these exist in Sarawak, vouched for by many a famous scientist.

"Do you care to see a duelling-ground of the argus pheasant?" asked the friend at whose place I awaited my steamer for home. "If so, come along!"

We wandered into the jungle, never very distant in Sarawak, and presently came upon a little clearing, where the ground had been winnowed of all dust, leaves, and twigs by the strong lower wing-quills of these most lovely cocks. From the soil, however, sprouted a few little bamboo stakes, sharpened—as these can be—to an edge of knife-like keenness.

"Those infernal things," remarked my companion, carefully pulling them up, "were dug in there by the wily native. You see," he continued, "the cocks always curl their necks around any small stumps or roots, and exert leverage on them by grasping them firmly with their beaks. Then they yank them clean out of the ground. Now, on returning for the fray, the birds would assuredly first have tried to clear the arena by treating these obstacles in their usual manner, and Mr. Native, on visiting the spot later, would probably have found several birds lying about dead—their throats cut from ear to ear!"

The Englishman in Italy

By Evelyn Pember

THE sun, incredibly clear and strong, shot up behind the mountain.

He shut his tired eyes and wriggled himself laboriously to the other side of his narrow bed, farther away from the sharp blade of light which pointed slantwise into his room. Then, when he had got himself across, he felt under the sheet for his letter. Mustn't leave it lying about. If people began fussing around with the bed-clothes, they might come across it. Wouldn't do to let Stella find it there—might hurt her feelings. He tucked it under his back where he could keep his fingers on the edge of it. He liked to have it where he could touch it.

Of course, the nurse found it every morning when she made the bed, and did all that ghastly washing business; and when he was settled up, handed it back to him with all sorts of coy remarks. Thank God he couldn't understand half of her jabber—didn't want to—so he screwed up his eyebrows and cocked his eyes at her and looked as sly as he could. What you could manage in the way of slyness depended on how far down under you were. Sometimes he had to cut the whole business pretty short; but some mornings, when he felt in fairly good form, he could wink and grimace enough for half a dozen intrigues.

Anyway, he got it back each day, and that was what had come to matter to him such a lot. A week he'd had it—eight days tomorrow. He wouldn't likely get another until the end of the fortnight—six days—and by then? Well, anyway, you never knew. . . .

He kept his eyes closed—tried hard to shut out the view. It was extraordinary how he could see the mountain, even through his eyelids. It towered in front of him, overwhelming, blotting out the things he tried so hard to see. He knew by heart every detail in the square that was framed by the open end of his room. He could almost count the grey ridges of the terraced vines, climbing absurdly high and steep from the valley. He could trace on his sheet the shapes of the upland pastures, the pale stripes of shale which slid down the sheer rock,

and the straight drop of the torrent hanging like a torn strip of muslin on the face of the lower cliff.

And almost more insistent, more inescapable than the view, was the silence of the place. It was so silent that you could hear everything that happened for miles up and down the valley. There was no background of noise like there was at home—no jolly chatter of birds, sparrows and starlings jabbering away all day—no rustling and rambling of the wind through the branches—just a clear silence against which each incidental noise sounded sharp and separate. He could hear the cry of the man directing his mule up the mountain path on the other side of the valley, the rumble of the little ox-wagon on the cobbles of the village out of sight below him, and, worst of all, he could hear all day and all night the terrible, familiar noises of the whole building—the coughing of the man in the room next door, poor devil! Poor devil, himself! Extraordinary how hard it was to get his mind away, to escape, even for a minute. He fingered the edge of his letter.

Stella came in.

"Darling boy! The sun's up over the mountain already!"

Stella had a way of saying things in a sort of ecstasy, as if the things she spoke of were amazingly beautiful, unspeakably significant.

Ironically he rolled his eyes to the blazing sword of light which lay along the wall by the side of his bed. It made him feel sulky, sometimes, the queer, excited kind of way that Stella had of talking of things. But he mustn't sulk with Stella—she'd been jolly good to him, Stella had.

"Darling, the mountain, *our* mountain; I think it's more wonderful every day! Look at it now! The *colour* of it! Who was it in the Bible who said: 'I will lift up my eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my strength'? He was right, you know, darling. I can't tell you how they help me, these mountains—the snow-capped tops, so divine, so unearthly—these pines struggling upwards, upwards. Darling," Stella put her pretty hands over her face for a moment, "I feel sometimes that I should never have had the strength, but for this

marvellous beauty. We can never thank George enough—can we, darling?—for making it possible for us both to be here. I know my boy feels it, too, though he's such a dumb old thing. I couldn't have borne it for him if he'd had to lie like this at home, looking out on those dreary ploughed fields, and those heavy elms."

Stella knelt down by the side of the bed and put her face on the edge of the sheet—only not too near him, of course, that wouldn't have done. "It must help you, my precious, all the grandeur and the light."

He held tight to the edge of his letter. "Yes, it does, old girl; yes, by Jove, it does!"

He blinked his tired eyes at the place where the mountain heaved up in front of the balcony.

"Boy, darling," Stella laid her arm over his poor bony legs and looked up at him with swimming eyes, "sometimes I feel that Heaven may find us walking together on those high mountain lawns. When I gaze at them so, I feel . . . ."

But this was more than he could bear. If he was to walk at all when he was dead, good Lord, it wouldn't be here that they'd have to look for him. Somewhere mighty different to this they'd find him. He must pull Stella up sharp, or, with his rotten nerves, you never knew what sort of rubbish he'd start thinking.

"I say, old lady," he patted her arm with the hand which he could spare from his letter, "aren't you going for your walk before this sun gets too hot for you?"

Stella got up from her knees, tipped her big hat into the right place, and patted the little curls over her ears.

Yes, she supposed she must go—though she hated leaving her boy even for an hour. The Italian just below him—that good-looking dark boy—wanted her to walk up to Santa Maria del Monte with him. She thought it did the poor fellow good for her to go with him. And she liked the little church for her own sake. She smiled at him ever so brightly and sweetly.

"Put a pencil and paper by me before you go, old girl."

Stella's face clouded. "You're not going to try to write to old Hobbins again?" Her voice was quite sharp. Extraordinary how she hated him having

anything to do with the old place! Sort of jealous of it she seemed.

"Not exactly write, old thing," he wheedled her; "at least I don't suppose so. It's just those setter pups I've been thinking about—and I might want to jot something down."

Well, old Stella didn't like it at all, but she gave in to him, and that was the main thing.

He was jolly glad to be alone again. He'd have an hour now before anyone came back, or anything was done to him. Lord! How tired he was. He pulled out his letter and held it between his finger and thumb where he could see it. It was a rest not to have to pretend any more.

And Stella had gone up to that silly little church. He'd been there when he first came to this God-forsaken place. Sort of a stock walk it was for the patients—before they couldn't walk any more! Nasty tawdry little place . . . painted images with hoops of paper roses round them—more like a Christmas tree than religion. And Stella was praying for him there in front of one of those fairy lights. How he hated these foreign jinks! He wouldn't have minded the old vicar at home putting him in along with the fine weather or the harvest—in a proper decent way, among "other sick persons."

And the churchyard. . . . Oh, God! Must he be stuck in there among the wire crosses and all the trumpery? *Photographs* on the wire crosses, too! They hadn't any sense of decency, these foreigners.

He wouldn't say a word to Stella now. She set such tremendous store by this place, and by having got him here—and goodness knew it was far more than they could afford, even with old George's help. He'd never let her know what he felt about it, not as long as he lived. But when he'd hooked it—when he'd kicked the bucket—she couldn't mind his wanting to get home then!

Home! Such a huge wave of longing swept over him that he could hardly bear the strength of it.

He took out his letter. It wasn't that he didn't know every line of it by heart, but somehow it was a comfort to see the words down in writing. He turned the page lovingly.

"Weather's been shocking these last three weeks. I was down round Tipper's spinney and the best part was bog. Hear the young pheasants hasn't done any too well. The new man they got in old East's place isn't none too good by all that we hear. Had a look at the long meadow, but the hay don't seem to have much chance, weather's been that bad these last three weeks."

He tried to snuff the smell of the wet earth, tried to feel the drip of the trees upon his head, the good English mud under his feet; but in front of him, shutting him into his prison, the great glowering mountain reared itself up into the glaring sky. How he hated it! No use it was to man or beast! Nothing lived on it—not a bird—not even a rabbit.

No, it was more than he could bear. Dead or alive (he smiled at the "or"), he'd have to escape.

He reached out for pencil and paper.

"Dear Stella," or did that sound chilly when one was dead? How did a dead person write so as not to hurt people's feelings? "My dear Wife"? No, that was frightful. "My dearest Stella"—perhaps that was better. "Should be very glad" (how infernally wobbly his hand was—he'd have to make it pretty short), "if you could get me home to bury. This has all been very nice, but should like to end up at Ditcham. Will write a line to old Hobbins, in case you don't know the bit I mean."

He knew just exactly where he wanted to lie—under the chestnut between the two big elms. The village club met there in the square under the shade of the farthest elm. On fine evenings they'd lean against the wall behind his head, and smoke their pipes and spit, and he'd hear their slow talk of the crops and the weather. And the boys would go shying stones at the chestnuts—whizzers?—shooters? What did they call them? Lord! he was forgetting his own language! Conkers! That was it. And the best conkers would fall on his grave, and they'd go scrambling on the top of him, jolly little beggars. And in September the great soft yellow moon would hang above the elms, and the mist would be waist-deep in the churchyard—good white, wet mist.

He called his starved mind back again. (The sun was scorching him. The nurse would draw the shade down in

a minute, but he'd feel the glare just the same.) He must say something grateful to old George. "Thank old George for all he's spent on me. . . ."

"Spent"? He'd forgotten about expense. He remembered now, he'd heard it cost far more to travel in a box than it did to travel alive—far more—the devil of a lot.

He took the sheet of paper in his bony fingers and tore it across and across, and put it in the envelope with his letter.

Ought his letter to go, too? In case Stella guessed? In case she ever dreamt how he'd eaten his heart out?

Would he get another? Not likely old Hobbins would write before the fortnight, and in six more days?

No. He'd keep it. He must have something.

And even here, if they dug a deepish hole for him, he'd get out of the sun.

Girl with Shawl

By Edmund Blunden

HER arms were like the Nymphs,
Or their white temple in a wood;
Only to look upon them
Was a beatitude,
Was to become a light in light,
A wave in wave, a flight in flight.

But still this murmuring came:
What was a charm that passing years
Would quite dethrone and darken—
That prayers, nor taunts, nor tears,
Could ever save from that recall
When death brings out the poisoned shawl?

Meanwhile she played her shawl
With beauty's wit, and that rare white
Challenged the rule and system
Of the eternal night
Which might have closed on Helen's kiss
But surely could not plunder this.

An Infantryman

By Edmund Blunden

PAINFULLY writhed the few last weeds upon those flatted uplands;
Cleft pods have dropped their blackened seeds into the trampled clay;
Wind and rain were running loose, and icy flew the whiplash;
Masked guns like autumn thunder drummed the outcast year away.

Hidden a hundred yards ahead with winter's blinding passion
The mule-beat track appeared half dead, even war's hot blood congealed;
The half-dug trenches brimmed like troughs, the camps lay slushed and empty,
Unless those bitter whistlings proved Death's army in the field.

Over the captured ridge above the hurt battalion waited,
And hardly had sense left to tell if ghost or living past
From hole to hole with sunken eyes and slow ironic orders,
While fiery fountains burst and clanged—and there your lot was cast.

Yet I saw your health and youth go brightening to the vortex,
The ghosts on guard, the storm uncouth, were then no match for you;
You smiled, you sang, your courage rang, and to this day I hear it,
Sunny as a May-day dance, along that spectral avenue.

"Says Sergeant Murphy"

By A. P. Garland

Cranks and Legislation

"You ought to have been at the Court today," said Heddle, "to hear the judge talking about backing horses and the way ——"

"Me?" interrupted Sergeant Murphy. "Me listen to a judge preachin' while I'd the form of the three-year-olds to work out? Not on your life. There's no preachin' judge in the land has anny message for me. Besides, I'm sick and tired of the amachoor preachers that infest this counthry.

"Whin I want a preacher, Heddle, I look for a clergyman that can tell me things that are for me binifit, no matter how little I like thim. But the judges, coroners, chairmin of permanent buildin' societies, and the other fellahs that withdhraw a sermon from their vest pockets on the smallest provocation—or none—get no birthday cards from me.

"The curse of this counthry, Heddle, is that so many people have the notion that they are their brother's keeper. Chuck a brick anywhere in the Sthrand and you'll raise a lump on a man whose wan aim in life is to see that his fellow min are behavin' the way he thinks proper.

"Suppose an alderman is invited to declare a new Savin's Bank open. Without the slightest hesitation he releases a sermon on thrift, and how the curse of the workin' classes is improvidince, and what a divil of a fine fellah he himself must have been to have put by three shillin's out of the four aweek that he dhrew as his first earnin's. It never occurs to him that the right way to declare a Savin's Bank open is to say, 'This is a Savin's Bank, and I declare it open. If anny man denies it, me coat's off to him here and now.' Instead, he juts out his Adam's apple and inflicts a sermon on the people that are too closely wedged together to get away.

"Fellahs like that, Heddle, are responsible for all the rotten laws that intherfere with a man's private life. They're the min you have to thank for closin' picture palaces and golf courses on Sunday, for crazy licensin' regulations, and for the vindictive Bettin' Tax that

I'm glad to see isn't goin' to bring in half what was expected."

"Why is that?" asked Heddle.

"For the simple reason that they wint about it the wrong way. If they'd put a reasonable licence fee on bookies, the big majority would have paid it and the Threasury would have got the money they wanted. But they had to show that on moral grounds they disapproved of backin' horses, so they put a vindictive tax on turnover—enough to kill bettin' in a few years. What was the result? Half the bookies gave up their offices and made for the free open spaces of the side sthreets where min are min and policemin can be spotted be their boots half a mile off. And now the small backer has a bookie on his doorstep, and the bookie after a bad day can take up his bed and make a bee line for the next county.

"That's always the way with vindictive laws, which mean crank laws. They provoke people to ignore thim.

"Mind you, nobody loves the bookie. No backer would have a sleepless night because a bookie's knuckle-duster diamond was reduced a carat or two. But people have the feelin' that the Bettin' Tax, as it now is, has to be laid at the door of the cranks that no Governmint seems to have pluck enough to face. So nobody cares a cuss about evadin' the tax, and even with a lot of the big bookies—the min Cabinet Ministhers might have a bet with—it's no secret that the books are wangled a bit, be arrangemint with the client.

"Now it's bad for the counthry whin decent citizens are ready to break laws. It generally shows that the laws thimselves are bad.

"How many clubs are there in London, Heddle, where a man who doesn't shout his ordher too loud can't have what dhrink he likes outside legal hours? Not many, I'll bet.

"The counthry is sick of these pifflin' laws that cranks have thrust on us. In Parliamint there's enough serious work to keep politicians goin' for years to come. But a bunch of thim are never happy except whin they're dhragoonin' us into bein' good little boys."

"I wonder when they'll stop all that nonsense about selling cigarettes and chocolates at night," said Heddle.

"Never," replied Sergeant Murphy. "Dora pro nobis."

The Norman Invasion

By Horace Shipp

Harold. By Alfred, Lord Tennyson. (Court Theatre.)
The Dictator. By Jules Romain. (Stage Society.)
The Unknown Warrior. By Paul Raynal. (Royalty Theatre.)
This Year of Grace! By Noel Coward. (London Pavilion.)

TENNYSON'S heavyweight blank verse drama stands as a monument to the English genius for resisting alien influences. No literary study is more fascinating than this of the conquest of our conquerors by a curious process of passive absorption of anything they have to offer, its subtle change, its final quiet disappearance under those qualities which are markedly English. If the Norman Conquest itself stands in our history as the triumphant racial manifestation of this process, almost any subsequent literary invasion will demonstrate the same phenomenon. Tennyson's verse, his treatment of his theme, his structure of the chronicle of Harold's resistance to the Normans is one of the most typically English pieces of all literature. Its virtues and its vices are English. The solidity, the—one dares say—pomposity of it, and the beauty which somehow belongs to this very stolidness, these things are Victorian; and by a continuance of the paradox since Victorianism was essentially German, they metamorphose themselves under our eyes into something essentially English.

The Court production is valuable for bringing out these very qualities. The play may lack dramatic power, may be cumbersome and unwieldy, but the smooth certainty of its language and its upbuilding give one a sense of æsthetic rightness which has its own real value. Moreover, it gives Mr. Paul Shelving an opportunity in décor and costumes to present something extremely pleasing to the eye, although his decorative sense has betrayed a little the supremely English quality of the work.

A seeming contradiction of this division of characteristics lay in the piece by M. Jules Romain which the Stage Society presented. *The Dictator* may have been chosen because it had a serious theme in the subject of the politician driven to dictatorship with the coming of power, but its pedestrian treatment of this idea made mere heaviness without compensating strength or beauty

of power. Without knowing the original, I feel it to be just possible that the translators lost something, that the creator of *Dr. Knock* may have given the cynicism of this harassed democrat in office, or the tragedy of his loneliness as he was forced to cut off one by one the ties of friendship, love, and comradeship. But however it happened, these things which might have been fine motives in the play were lost in the presentation and the production. It seems a pity that the Stage Society, with its unrivalled opportunity for giving us fine work, should include this second French play this season, and give us no English work at all. One English play in four seems a fair proportion. We would sacrifice this, however, for four foreign masterpieces, but are not to be put off with a French play in the English manner without the English value. Their penultimate production which brought *Young Woodley* to England, and their promised one of Werfel's *Paul Among the Jews* must be set against the lapse.

One other French work with which I have not hitherto dealt in these columns—because its method of production has always been dictated by the assumption of unpopularity, although the public interest in it has necessitated its going on from theatre to theatre—is that of *The Unknown Warrior*. It defies analysis. Despite the fact of a good dramatic structure, the impression left is rather that of a poem than a play. The subtlety, the nuances of this study of wartime psychology; the deep below deep of self-analysis and social analysis; more than all, the profound pity of it, make *The Unknown Warrior* a thing of rare beauty. As I write, its continuance is still precarious, but tribute must be paid to its loveliness and to the fineness of the production by Ellen van Volkenburg, and the acting by Maurice Browne in particular, and of Rosalinde Fuller.

The piece scores, too, in that it expresses, as perhaps nothing outside Frederick Keeling's letters have expressed, that new unromantic heroism to which the war gave rise. Old wars could be fought either unthinkingly or with sentimental passion for religion, cause, or country. By many combatants the European war also was fought in such moods, but for a number of the others none of these values held, and they had to invent a new loyalty

to Nihilism itself to carry them through. *The Unknown Warrior* is the apologia for that faithless faith, and Paul Raynal and his translator, Cecil Lewis, have conveyed it exquisitely.

If I include the new Cochran revue—*This Year of Grace!*—in this article, it is not without relevance, for Mr. Noel Coward, who is responsible for the book, the lyrics, and the music, comes more nearly to having a Gallic mind than any theatrical person in England, and Mr. Cochran has taken the essentially French form of the revue and acclimatized it thoroughly to Piccadilly Circus. *This Year of Grace!* is splendid fun and excellent measure for your money withal. Critics will quarrel as to whether Mr. Coward has written better lyrics or music or invented better ideas, but the mind we take to revue is one which almost forbids comparisons so long as we are not bored. There are moments in this show when we come near to losing interest, but they are soon past and something really amusing has taken their place, or Miss Maisie Gay has come back and we give ourselves up again to the fun.

The strength of practically all revue lies in its opportunity for burlesque. When it goes astray, it is because a sentimental note has been sounded, or because the thing burlesqued is unworthy or somehow outside the realm of parody. The Chauve Souris item in this production starts badly by burlesquing Balieff (who cannot possibly be exaggerated and, therefore, should not be imitated), but is very good when Maisie Gay, in a typical Bat Theatre assembly and décor, gives off some of those piercing notes which belong specifically to herself and these Russians. But "The Bus Rush," "The English Lido Beach," the skit upon Constructivist Ballet, and Maisie Gay on that verge between the grossly comic and the pathetic which is the despair of any but an English humorist, were delightful fun given every ounce of virtuosity to bring them across the footlights. The dancing throughout the show was excellent; the singing, as is the manner with revues, much less good. So *This Year of Grace!* takes its place among the Cochran successes, miles removed from those intimate little productions which the French know as revues and another convert to unblushing Englishism.

The Songs of Ralph Vaughan Williams

By Hermon Ould

DR. RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS was born in Gloucestershire in 1872. A composer who can claim the Sea, the London and the Pastoral Symphonies, the Three Norfolk Rhapsodies, and the suite " Flos Campi " (to single out but a few of his more important works) is unlikely to be remembered chiefly as a song-writer. Yet throughout his career Dr. Vaughan Williams has from time to time been moved to express himself in the song form, and today, when he is probably only half-way through his musical career, some forty or more songs stand to his credit. Moreover, his songs are not the throw-outs incidental to an active creative life, the using up of stray ideas which did not happen to fit into some more important work, but are themselves a very immediate expression of his musical and spiritual progress. No dates of composition are needed to follow their chronology: if the latest songs could not have come from the Vaughan Williams of 1910, neither could the songs of that period belong to the present.

No composer comes fully fledged into a personal idiom; but even his early published work shows little of the influence of German composers on Dr. Vaughan Williams, and few of the songs I have seen would lead one to suppose that he once studied composition under Max Bruch in Berlin. The first handful of songs, however, give hints of his early preferences. " Silent Noon " (D. G. Rossetti's sonnet), published in 1903, is a beautiful song, sensitively responsive to the poem, but it shows no marked originality. It reveals more than a trace of Brahms and a probably unconscious reminder of his " Der Tod, das ist die kühle Nacht." " Dreamland " (1906) also fails to strike a particularly individual note, but it is effective enough, wandering gently from key to key and oddly recalling Wagner. The two Tennyson songs, " Tears, Idle Tears " and " The Splendour Falls," both appear to belong to 1903, when Vaughan Williams had not yet set out on his own path. Musicianly, effective, and sincere, they are both somewhat too elaborate, and the first is over-charged

with emotion. Tennyson could be pompous, but in this lyric he was not, and undue emphasis has made him seem so. The same tendency to over-elaboration occurs here and there during the composer's career and may be partly due to not thinking pianistically. The piano is not an instrument for which he shows any great love, and some of his accompaniments, though written for it, would find happier expression either orchestrally or chorally. Occasionally he asks the piano to do more than it is capable of doing, arbitrary and inexact instrument that it is!

"Heart's Haven" (copyright in 1923, but presumably written much earlier) is another Rossetti setting, a little over-burdened with notes in the accompaniment, but grateful to sing and warm in emotion. "The Songs of Travel," which Mr. Plunket Greene made popular, date from 1905, and though they employ an idiom that bears traces of its forbears, nevertheless they carry indications of the coming Vaughan Williams. They are popular in the best sense: tuneful, singable, even catchy, yet they show a musicianship which would be quite beyond the capacity of the mere ballad-writer. Here is good music which is also popular music. The confident and graceful changes of key in the second of these songs, "Bright is the Ring of Words," are characteristic of Vaughan Williams, but in later years he has not always provided melodies which would so readily charm the musically unsophisticated.

None of the songs mentioned shows much trace of folk-music, and yet the composer must already have embarked on those investigations which became one of the most important influences in the moulding of his own course, for "The Winter's Willow," published in 1903, precedes "Songs of Travel," and is quite evidently cast in a folk-song frame. The words by Barnes are in the Dorset dialect, the phraseology being pseudo-"folk," and Dr. Vaughan Williams has provided a tune which fits it like a glove. Much more obviously "folk" is the setting of the same poet's "Blackmwore by the Stour," which might well be a genuine country dance tune—a Dorset Rufty-Tufty—with an unexpected D natural in the key of E at the point where the leader of the dance would instruct one to "set and turn partner." "Linden Lea," much better known, is scarcely less a deliberate attempt to employ a traditional English folk-idiom, and the ease with which the composer makes

it his own, treating it in a simple contrapuntal fashion, suggests that he has not gone out in search of a congenial idiom but found it within himself. Be that as it may, there is no doubt that English folk-music plays a bigger part in his inspiration than any other external influence.

The setting of "Whither Must I Wander?" (R. L. S.'s words), no less "folky," has a flavour that is less distinctively of the southern counties, a northern, even Scottish, pathos giving point to the words. More sophistication has gone to the making of "Buonaparty" (verses from Hardy's "Dynasts"), but it is nevertheless conceived as a folk-song; while "The Devil and Bony-party" (from "Hugh the Drover") is a frank crib from the Ballynure Ballad. The two little songs by Christina Rossetti in one cover, "Boy Johnny" and "If I Were a Queen," are less obviously couched in a folk-idiom, though even here it is not completely absent. The first with its attractive lilt has a Scottish element, while the tune of the second has a neatness and economy which suggest French folk-songs. Dr. Vaughan Williams has shown his interest in early French songs by providing settings for "Réveillez-vous, Piccarz" and "L'Amour de Moy."

In 1909 he wrote what appears to me to be his most important contribution to song literature, "On Wenlock Edge." This is a cycle of six songs for tenor voice, with accompaniment of pianoforte and string quartet, the words from Mr. Housman's "A Shropshire Lad." The strings are *ad lib.*, but the suite is incomparably more impressive with the strings than without. The cycle is conceived and expressed with great emotional intensity which never once relaxes. Although only superficially onomatopoetic, the first song (from which the suite takes its name) is full of the atmosphere of the lonely Shropshire ridge, where the revisiting traveller, listening to the complaints of the angry wind, becomes aware of the mortality of man and the relative permanence of Nature. It is possible that the composer has given the music a poignancy greater than the words call for, but it would be difficult for one who had heard this setting to read the poem without gratitude for having his understanding quickened by music so moving and so unsentimental. The second song, "From Far, from Eve and Morning," less elaborate, is no less affecting, though scarcely more than an accompanied recitative.

The setting of "Is My Team Ploughing?" has been

criticized on the ground that the composer has given a melodramatic and highly emotional climax to a poem which was merely intended to be cynical. The poem is so well known that it is not necessary to quote it. The dead man speaks from the grave: "Is my team ploughing?" and is answered: "No change, though you lie under the land." He inquires about his girl, and is reassured: she is happy. He inquires about his friend: "Has he found to sleep in a better bed than mine?" "Yes, lad," answers the friend; "I lie as lads would choose. I cheer a dead man's sweetheart. Never ask me whose." Dr. Vaughan Williams brings all his emotional forces to bear on the "Yes, lad" (which he repeats), following the phrase with a bar's ominous pause and an artfully broken-up "Never ask me whose," which drains the last ounce of pathos out of it. Is his interpretation correct? Taking into consideration the extremely high pitch of emotion at which the whole suite has been planned, I should answer, Yes. The poet, looking on as a detached spectator, may be a cynic, but the persons whom he has created in his poem should be taken at their face value, and "Never ask me whose" are the words of one fearing to hurt and not one cynically indifferent.

The fourth item, "Oh, when I was in Love with You," is the lightest in the series and leads to the most elaborate of all, "Bredon Hill," the one which appeals to me the least. Its ingenuity is undoubted, its piling up of bell effects is clever and inventive. Indeed, it seems to me that invention rather than imagination has gone to the making of the song, which a simpler treatment would have made more impressive. I pass on to "Clun," which brings the suite to a tranquilly beautiful, withal melancholy, end. "On Wenlock Edge" seems to me one of the most notable achievements in modern English music, and no student of songs can afford to overlook it.

Dr. Vaughan Williams's one opera, "Hugh the Drover," written during 1911–1914 but not produced until 1924, contains a number of detachable songs which Messrs. Curwen have published separately. These for the most part show the composer in a relatively light mood. "Life must be full of care" is a flowing and tender song with a Linden Lea lilt; "Hugh's Song of the Road" is splendidly vigorous and never lets you down; "Here on My Throne" is a melodious and graceful song with an

unbroken line which leaves you to breathe as best you can. All of the songs in "Hugh the Drover" are worthy of separate consideration, but the rest of my space must be devoted to an important side of Vaughan Williams's gift which has lately been further developed.

With the "Five Mystical Songs" (1911) for baritone solo and optional chorus he showed in song-form a preoccupation with religious subjects which had already manifested itself in other works. These songs are settings of poems by George Herbert, whose blend of solemnity and ecstasy is very congenial to Vaughan Williams's genius. No other living English composer seems so naturally to express the ecstatic side of the Christian faith, whose ritual is so intimately bound up with the symbolism of love. "Easter" is a rapturous outpouring; "I got me Flowers," one of Herbert's most beautiful poems, is simple to the verge of obviousness, yet completely satisfying; in "The Call," the composer, exploiting model harmonies as is his wont, carries one back to a much earlier and more believing day—an effect produced also in "A Clear Midnight," one of three Walt Whitman poems. "Antiphon" (one of the "Five Mystical Songs") seems hardly to belong to our century, so fullheartedly and with such conviction does it celebrate "My God and King." Here the carillon accompaniment, of which most of our composers are too fond, is employed aptly and with almost overwhelming effect. The "Four Hymns" appeared much later (1920), but they are in the same mood, though the medium has become somewhat more subtle, the harmonic scheme more individual and even more unconventional.

"Four Poems by Fredegond Shove" are in the same vein again, although only one of them is ostensibly "religious." The music in these later songs, whether avowedly religious or not, is so subtly distilled and so remote from physical passion that it gives a peculiar impression of spirituality. The three Whitman poems, whose theme is death, not unnaturally bear this character; but even the two poems of Seumas O'Sullivan, "A Piper" and "The Twilight People," have a quality of unearthliness.

It has been possible to allude only briefly to much that would repay study. The songs themselves are published by Messrs. Ashdown, Boosey, Curwen, Stainer & Bell, and the Oxford University Press.

Books

AT HOME AND ABROAD

ROMANTIC LONDON. By RALPH NEVILL. Cassell. 12s. 6d.

WELL known as a chronicler of London on its gayer side, Mr. Nevill has made out of streets, clubs, parks and earlier notabilities a light and very agreeable book. Incidentally he lures the reader on without tedium to some of the solid history which lies behind the oldest buildings, and he has a keen eye for those remnants of the past which still survive the iconoclastic efforts of modern improvers.

> What's not destroyed by time's devouring hand?
> Where's Troy, and where's the Maypole in the Strand?

A place-name here and there, like "Broad Sanctuary" at Westminster, reminds the inquisitive that London is a palimpsest. The pleasant account of maypoles might recall Stowe's gossip about the Church of St. Andrew Undershaft. It owes its name to a shaft or pole which was set up early on May Day opposite the south door and was higher than the church steeple. In some instances restoration, a favourite pastime of the nineteenth century, was little better than destruction. Mr. Nevill recognizes the exceptions which have produced decent work. St. James's Street still maintains an air of old-fashioned comeliness and stately trading, but here of late the innovator has been busy. Piccadilly has lost its Eros, one of the few London monuments which will bear the inspection of an artist. In this quarter, as Mr. Nevill remarks, the photographs of "Professional Beauties" no longer attract the passer-by. There are no such beauties now, because, I suppose, mere good looks are regarded as Victorian and insipid, and something more startling is needed to attract attention. Rotten Row today has few riders; the motor-car has turned them out. The music and gaudy trappings of the restaurant are daily turning out the old English tavern with its pride in sound food. Long's, though it had a reputation for being expensive, gathered first-class company for many a year. The differences between the gay eighties and our more sober age are now difficult to realize. Dickens's "Dictionary of London" for 1881 says that there are only four sets of flats in the metropolitan area! Mr. Nevill vouches for the existence of a "linkman," who, though he carries no flambeaux, still survives

to call cabs. The cries of London are described as now practically all gone, but I heard last year the lavender girl whose haunting chant seems to wail that summer is going. The best place to see old shop-fronts today is some museum. Signs hung outside shops were, however, properly given up as dangerous to traffic. A novelty is Mr. Nevill's notice of Castle Yard, Millbank, which is full of the figure-heads of old ships. The former river pageants of the Lord Mayor are a strange contrast to the present disgraceful neglect of the Thames. Pleasure steamers are not what they might be, and landing-places are rotting unused. I find it difficult to accept the view that Tyburn is " T'Aye bourne " because the Aye stream once flowed near it. Before the Conquest the place-name was " Teoburnan " and " Tiburne " in 1086.

If London has been indifferent to art and antiquity, it has profited by the labours of art collectors, as Mr. Nevill shows. Little noticed or derided in their day, they have a secure posthumous repute. Of gay characters, one of the most notable was " Old Q," and it is likely that, indifferent as he was to public opinion, he was denigrated beyond his deserts. He was a sad dog with a bad name. The book concludes with some reminiscences of the actresses who took the town. Not the least charming of them was Nance Oldfield, Pope's " Narcissa," whom Mr. Nevill owns as an ancestress.

V. R.

ADVENTURES IN FIVE CONTINENTS. By LIEUT.-COLONEL P. T. ETHERINGTON. With 36 illustrations. Hutchinson. 18s.

THIS is a first-rate book of travel and adventure, with something notable on every page. The title alone shows the width of the author's experience; he has no need to spin out his matter; and, though he is modest about his writing, it is singularly clear and effective. He has met men known everywhere, and has been in some of the least-known places of the earth. The Bolsheviks ordered him to be killed, but he survived to oppose their machinations in Asia for four years over an area as large as Europe. Good stories vary the solid information provided, and the best of them, including a rebuke administered by King Edward, have an agreeable novelty. The miner who lighted his pipe with a five-pound note was as silly as a young boaster we knew who did the same at Cambridge.

The teller of marvels is always likely to be disbelieved, and we now learn that De Rougemont was correct in most of his tales. Natives do ride the turtle, and giant fish exist with stings in their tails.

Colonel Etherington had the enterprise once to make his way by acting as a cook at sea, and explains that he was not greatly

tried, because the tempestuous weather kept the dining-room empty. He has had some strange food offered to him. The account of a Chinese feast includes these words:

> A grilled rat restores the hair when you are bald, whilst a stewed black cat will cure a fever. The leading dish, however, was a number of newly-born white mice, served alive, to be dipped in treacle and swallowed whole, like a prairie oyster.

This was too much for one who had eaten the food of thirty-eight different countries. The London air defences, of which the author took command in 1925, lead to some warnings about the aerial warfare of the future. London by air is very near any part of Europe, and searchlights of great power will be needed, such as the French one, which has a range in clear weather of ninety miles.

SPORT AND TRAVEL IN THE HIGHLANDS OF TIBET. By SIR HENRY HAYDEN and CÉSAR COSSON. With an Introduction by SIR FRANCIS YOUNGHUSBAND. Cobden-Sanderson. 21s.

THE two companions whose diaries led to this book were unfortunately killed on an Alpine climb, though both experienced mountaineers. Sir Henry Hayden was not only Director of the Geological Survey of India, but a charming man whose genial wisdom fitted him admirably for intercourse with foreigners. His account of his travels in Tibet with his old Alpine guide is easily written and full of interesting detail. He went there first with an armed force, but in 1922 as a friend welcome everywhere, to investigate minerals. Tibet, long inaccessible to the outside world, still holds many curiosities, but has taken kindly, we learn, to the Homburg hat. The Lama is an authority strictly obeyed, so that the travellers found cigarettes prohibited among the natives. The Tibetans make a good impression in the book, though they do not wash. Lhasa is insanitary, but the people do not apparently suffer much from this defect. Dogs and pigs represent the Municipal Board of Health. The fatal age for Lamas is seventeen, as regents like to go on ruling. The sacred ruler seen by the party had fled twice, once to the Chinese, and once to the British in India. He has found the latter his best friends. The natives were forbidden by the Lama to shoot, but Cosson killed three gazelles with one freak shot. In the region of the Great Lakes much cold had to be endured, but elsewhere fine shows of flowers are noted. To follow the narrative a map is necessary, and an excellent one is provided in the pocket of the book. The illustrations exhibit some striking scenery, some of it recalling Alpine heights and valleys

BOOKS

FICTION

THE BRIDGE OF SAN LUIS REY. By THORNTON WILDER. Longmans. 6s. net.

UNUSUAL in conception, full of variety and character as was Mr. Wilder's earlier book, "The Cabala," it did not suggest so original a plan or so rich an assortment of human-nature studies as he has provided in his present book. It is a closely interwoven set of three short stories, with an opening and a fatal conclusion not merely common to all, but identical in time and subject. The Franciscan, Brother Juniper, who happens to see the snapping, in July 1714, of a century-old wicker bridge in Peru, and the fall of five foot-passengers into the gorge beneath, devotes himself to investigating the life histories of these victims, not all unwilling. The upshot of his inquiries appears to be that, in every case, this apparent disaster was probably the best thing that could have happened at that particular time. The story of the Marquesa de Montemáyer and her daughter, married in Spain, has some close affinity with that of Madame de Sévigné and Madame de Grignan, in the two facts of the epistolary genius of the mother and the failure of her daughter to respond adequately to her intense maternal affection. If there is a "heroine" of the book, she is the quite unheroic actress Camila, "The Perichole," whose selfish nature is seemingly responsible for the moral or mental condition of three out of the five who are broken on the rocks. Two thoughts expressed by the characters may be quoted as keynotes to its "motive." The abbess says: "There is a land of the living and a land of the dead, and the bridge is love—the only survival, the only necessity." Uncle Pio thinks that those who have no capacity for suffering in love cannot be said to be alive, and certainly could not live again after death.

WINTERSMOON: PASSAGES IN THE LIVES OF TWO SISTERS, JANET AND ROSALIND GRANDISON. By HUGH WALPOLE. Macmillan. 7s. 6d.

THE close love of the two sisters leads one of them to make a *mariage de convenance* for the sake of decent comfort for both. Janet marries into the high nobility, gives an heir to her husband, who starts with a passion for somebody else and finally reaches the haven of mutual love. But all her efforts cannot keep her sister from a rackety and unfortunate career of the sort which appeals to the up-to-date girl. Janet and Rosalind part in spite of their love, for Rosalind belongs to that dominant section of Society which dislikes, if it does not actually disintegrate, the old world of the nobility, with its sound ideals but slight sense of futility. The duke of the story, like another old lord, is a splendid

specimen of the gentleman, but somehow he seems unequal to his obvious opportunities. He is nothing like so competent as Plantagenet Palliser. The trials and glories of the big place in Wiltshire are very well done, but we do not think Mr. Walpole has quite brought out his sense of the part his great people play, or might play. It is something, at any rate, in these days to find the "stately homes of England" and their occupiers put in the foreground. In the scenes of restrained emotion between the duke and his son the novel is at its best. Rosalind, with her ultra-modern views and eagerly ferocious companions, does not, to our thinking, quite come off, but there is true and excellent stuff in her intercourse with her sister. The scenery throughout is admirable, and Mr. Walpole has learnt the art of writing like Trollope. He is natural and effective without teasing us with a parade of clever epigrams.

LAST POST. By FORD MADOX FORD. Duckworth. 7s. 6d.

THIS book is the last of that series of Tietjens novels which have earned their author a place wherever literature as such is talked about. Its achievement, in truth, is technical more than all else. It records the quiet events of the afternoon when Mark Tietjens lies dying, and its actual incidents comprise the coming to the house of a few visitors. Nothing more; yet their passage sets in motion long trains of thought—retrospective, current, prospective—wherein the whole of the cycle of the novels is reconstructed, and wherefrom it issues afresh, seen from the angles of the varying mentalities which have had their places in it. It is a *tour de force* of novel technique, marked with the peculiar quality of style which the author has made his own.

BROOK EVANS. By SUSAN GLASPELL. Victor Gollancz. 7s. 6d.

THIS latest fruit of Miss Glaspell's imagination and experience is not without beauty, nor partial sweetness, but it leaves a bitter taste. Its core is the preference of a love-child for her nominal father over her real mother. When Joe Copeland, having "anticipated marriage" with Naomi Kellogg beside the brook and made her painfully "interesting" to her puritanical parents, gets killed in a reaping-machine before he has made her his wife, the mature Caleb Evans, whom she has recently rejected, consents to marry her, she then believing that he will never insist on his conjugal rights. Novel-readers of experience will foresee some of the ensuing trouble. But they will not suppose that Naomi, having given Caleb a son of his own, who in infancy is killed by a horse, will be harshly reproached by her partially instructed daughter (named "Brook" in remembrance of her origin) for

not giving Caleb another son, nor that Brook will regard Caleb on account of his conduct to her mother as the noblest man of whom she has ever heard!

The time comes when, at eighteen, Brook has herself a lover, Tony Ross, of whom Caleb disapproves. Naomi, determined that the path of love shall be easy for her daughter, arranges, without arousing the girl's suspicions, that the lovers shall elope. Discovering, after leaving home, but before meeting Tony, her mother's part in the affair, Brook throws him over and departs to the East with a woman missionary. She leaves a letter full of affection for Caleb and of reproach for Naomi. The novel ends when, as a widow of thirty-eight, Brook has given herself to an impassioned Icelander in a French forest, thus following, in early middle age, the example set by the youthful Naomi under American trees.

There is little that is specially remarkable in the writing apart from the characterization, the most original features of which have here been suggested. The novel will have many attentive readers, but will add few bay leaves to the crown of an author who gave us one of the frankest and most vivid of recent biographies and one of the most ruthless of modern plays.

THE TRIALS OF TOPSY. By A. P. HERBERT. Ernest Benn. 6s.

THE outpourings of Topsy, already beloved of "Punch" readers, lose nothing by being taken, as it were, at a gulp, instead of in sips as heretofore; for whatever may be urged for or against the stimulus inherent in feminine prattle, there is no denying the spell of its ultra-modernity as set forth by the searching humour of Mr. Herbert. It is perhaps disappointing to find our old friend George Rowland cutting such a poor figure at the "Majestic" on "carnival night," and the thought that the sagacious, if irrepressible, Haddock is at last "blighted in matrimony" may raise apprehensions for the future, though with such a mate these must needs be ill-founded. Periodical humour—if the term be permissible—is apt to pall in book form, but we could have welcomed a double portion of these "Trials."

THE IMPERIAL DRAGON. By JUDITH GAUTIER. Translated by M. H BOUCHIER. Brentano. 7s. 6d.

DO you like romance? Upon the answer to that question depends your liking for this book, for it is the quintessence of romance, wherein only the impossible is probable and only the improbable possible. The setting—of Peking in its great days—is most admirably done; the story of the rise to the Imperial throne of the Nietzschean labourer and of the devotion to him of

his peasant girl love and a romantic poet is fine in the romantic fashion; the picture of Chinese life and quaint beliefs has a charm of its own. So if one dislikes it at all, it is because reality has brought its crude balance to weigh this delicate *chinoiserie*. Thus weighed, scarcely one incident holds its own. So we remember that the story is by the daughter of the French artist who made Oriental romance his own, and we revel in the excitement of its incident, the opulence of its descriptions, the quaintness of its folklore, and the directness of its story-telling. The coarse thumb and finger of logic are not for picking up a fairy-tale, and once we have seen our hero's shadow lengthen to the likeness of a dragon, we follow his fortunes (and more particularly those of his two more intriguing companions) through a thousand adventures to the throne which that shadow predicts, and give thanks for a good story well told.

HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY

THE WAR ON LAND: 1914–18. By DOUGLAS JERROLD. Benn. 6d.

WITHIN eighty pages Mr. Jerrold has succeeded in giving a clear and admirably compact account of the various fronts involved in the war, and the bigger movements, with the results expected and obtained from them. He has profited by information which only came to hand after the war was over, and is thus able to correct miscalculations and misconceptions which had gained currency. On the whole, the war, especially on the Western front, was a series of manœuvres often misapplied and of mistaken beliefs about the enemy's intentions. Show manœuvres in peace time had led to the view that in war, with aeroplane scouts overhead, surprise would not be an important factor in winning an advantage. As a matter of fact, it was. Our tanks were certainly a surprise, and possible chances on both sides were lost by inaction. Mistakes were numerous, and sometimes movements were staged at the front rather for their effect at home than for any compensating gain. Such, in part, we take to have been the very expensive Passchendaele advance. But in criticizing it is always well to remember the vast forces involved, the length of the line covered, and the dangers even of successful advance beyond certain limits.

In early days the incompetence of von Kluck was invaluable to our side, and Mr. Jerrold calls Moltke's failure to reinforce him "the supreme strategic blunder of the war." Kitchener alone realized what the war was going to be, and was busy creating man-power for the future; so his name lives. "Others," remarks Mr. Jerrold, "must be content with not unflattering references in their own autobiographies," often supported by the betrayal

of official secrets. The Dardanelles campaign was very near being an important success; but it was too long delayed and carried out by an inadequate force. What the survivors of the Somme advance of 1916 think of their glorious work in the mud and its futility it were best not to inquire. At the time the German losses were supposed to be much greater than our own. They were actually much less, their arrangements for defence and attack being much better than ours. The 1917 campaign was in the hands of General Nivelle, who is the subject of some mordant criticism in these pages. Our terrible losses in the German offensive of 1918 should never be mentioned without adding the fact that forces which might have saved our broken lines were kept in England.

The beginning of the end came with the second Battle of the Marne, launched while a German offensive was still going on. Marshal Foch took great risks, but he justified them.

LOUIS XIV. By C. S. FORESTER. Methuen. 10s. 6d.

THIS is history for the general reader, unencumbered with the array of notes and references which display the expert's erudition, and none the worse for that. Mr. Forester wisely treats Louis as a person, not as an epoch, and a king who apparently enjoyed for a long term of years the pomp and etiquette which would have been dreary beyond words to many. Yet this display indicated a passion for order which served Louis well. He never got drunk in an age of heavy drinking. The idea of "glory," much more French than English, is a poor justification for the wars of the period, but considering Louis's lack of training, not to say ignorance, we can applaud his choice of the right men and his generous way with pensions. Absolute in his power, he was not vindictive in punishing those he disliked, as many kings have been. One may doubt, as with our own Elizabeth, how far his greatness was due to others. Much of his success was certainly due to Colbert, after whose death religious persecution did great harm to France.

Mr. Forester tells well the story of his various loves, who annoyed as well as amused him. The cleverest and most reasonable of them, the Widow Scarron, came latest. He finds Louis "above the average in diligence, industry, and conscientiousness when he thought he ought to be conscientious," and maintains throughout a judicious view free from the exaggerations in praise or blame of previous writers. His writing is easy and pointed without that excessive search after irony which is growing tedious today, and his book is of reasonable length. History is more likely to be read in such monographs as this than in the heavy work of the specialist.

THE LIFE OF MATHEW DAWSON. By E. M. HUMPHRIS. With illustrations. Witherby. 12s. 6d.

WHILE this memoir is overloaded with details of horses of no great note, it is one that certainly deserved to be written. Racing is so often associated with swindling and dubious characters that the Dawson family stands out as a model of good sportsmanship and unblemished integrity. George Dawson, who was a Scottish trainer of horses, had several sons in the same business, especially Tom and Mathew. The sons showed their excellent Scottish education and could hold their own with the nobles whose horses they looked after. Tom wrote a letter to Sir Charles Monck which is said to be famous and included the words, "I will not permit you, or any other man, be his rank what it may, to take the slightest liberty with my character." Mathew was equally firm, both with his "boys" and his clients, and the biography brings out well his dignity and charm. In his early days he was not a secure judge of a horse's merits, but later his successes were innumerable, the unbeaten St. Simon being his greatest horse. He and his pupil, Archer, with Lord Falmouth as owner, made a formidable combination indeed, though it seems a little ridiculous to say that they "will be remembered when empires crash and poets and philosophers are dust." Who today remembers the owner, trainer or rider of Eclipse?

The book amply illustrates Horace's maxim, "Fortes creantur fortibus et bonis," for good blood tells wonderfully on the turf. The fact that two-year-olds do not always justify their reputation later is not really surprising. Racing at so early an age must be a great strain on a young animal. Mathew protested against "keeping the same old horses running on, and spoiling sport." The wise owner of today, we believe, does not continue running the winner of a big race, for such a horse is much more valuable for stud purposes. St. Simon's fee as a sire, which a visitor to Welbeck would not believe, was 500 guineas. Mathew had a wonderful influence over animals and was well aware of their idiosyncrasies, which, after all, are more reasonable than the superstitious fancies of their backers. He thought it reasonable to sleep next door to a coming Derby winner, which is a sufficient comment on the morality of the turf.

GENERAL

A BOOK OF WORDS: SELECTIONS FROM SPEECHES AND ADDRESSES DELIVERED BETWEEN 1906 AND 1927. By RUDYARD KIPLING. 7s. 6d.

THESE addresses, delivered to audiences foreign and native, show the polished versatility of the author. He is far from the days when, for the purpose of being vivid, he abolished the semicolon. He can still wield the short, sharp sentence; but he can

also develop his effects in the leisurely style which adds to dignity and comprehension. Here we find the happy teller of stories, the framer of ingenious and original maxims, and, above all, the man who believes in the Empire and knows what the men who work for it are like. He says of "the spirit of the Navy":

> Now, nobody wants to undervalue machinery, but surely, gentlemen, guns and machinery and armour are only ironmongery, after all. They may be the best ironmongery in the world, and we must have them, but if talking, and arguing, and recriminating, and taking sides about them is going to react unfavourably on the men who have to handle the guns and sleep behind the armour and run the machinery—why then, the less talk we have on Service matters outside the Service the better all round. Silence is what we want.

He has a firm belief, which will be shocking to some, in the future of the larger England, and he states and repeats the maxim: "If you give a man more than he can do he will do it. If you only give him what he *can* do he'll do nothing." The application of "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth" to the English is good, but belongs to Mark Twain. The handicaps of the literary man are frankly acknowledged, and the "First Critic" is described as one "who spent his short but vivid life in trying to explain that a man need not be a hen to judge the merits of an omelette." Few writers have got so vividly into the life of today on its material side as Mr. Kipling; so it is interesting to find him putting up a strong plea for the ancient classics. The over-careful stylist is not often the first-rate author, a thing critics are constantly forgetting, so that we are glad to see this verdict:

> Our English literature, I think, has always been the expression of a race more anxious to deliver what was laid upon it than to measure the means and methods of delivery.

The last address in the book, on "Our Indian Troops in France," is the most difficult, and admirable in its dignity and simplicity. Mr. Kipling is more epigrammatic than Mr. Baldwin, but both in their speeches go to the very heart of English feeling.

LAUGHING. By MARTIN ARMSTRONG. Jarrold. 5s.

THERE is little room in the world of books today for the long essay. We must content ourselves with collections of "middles" done into book form; yet the essay has a charm and a function which no other literary form can supply; it cannot hide behind a story as the novel can, nor with poetry take refuge in emotion, nor subject writing to mere information. It is inevitably a little self-conscious and dandified, a fop among literary forms, and to be forgiven its intrusion just inasmuch as it proves pleasant and is in the best sense witty.

In publishing the series "These Diversions," Messrs. Jarrold are giving an opportunity for the art; in "Laughing," Mr. Martin Armstrong has charmingly fulfilled his obligations to it. A delightful book! The Prelude, we grant, is forced and unreal, but we soon forget it in the quiet movement of the prose as it dances a graceful minuet round its gay subject. We place it on our shelves next Meredith's own exquisite "Essay on Comedy," and far, far from the anatomizing of M. Bergson.

THE REVOLT OF MODERN YOUTH. By JUDGE BEN LINDSEY and WAINWRIGHT EVANS. Brentano. 10s. 6d.

IF there is any place where people give a loose to their emotions, it is the United States; and Judge Lindsey, who has found an excellent collaborator in Mr. Evans to take down his experiences, says about the Juvenile and Family Court of Denver:

> More hidden truth about the minds and conduct of young people comes to the surface in my court, I venture to say, than [in] any place in the world.

He helped 769 delinquent girls of high-school age in 1920 and 1921, and he came to the conclusion that girls who mature early are in special danger, because mentally they may still be children. The book is a strong protest against that stupidity which dotes on ignorance and then turns on, or rather turns out, a victim who sins unwarned. The right home training should keep young people straight, but such homes in Denver—and elsewhere, we fear—are apt to be the exception today. Old traditions are gone, and we may well ask what has taken their place.

> Our parrot system of education has the additional and dangerous effect of making young people into rubber stamps, slaves of mass sentiment like their elders.

America, with its immense tale of divorces and such shocking incidents as the Leopold-Loeb murder, has much to think about. Wrong eating, we are told, is prevalent everywhere, and its effect on youth is evident; but salvation "from the lunacies of our social system" is not beyond hope. English readers may not agree with some of the solutions offered, but it should be realized that liberty and lawlessness and obsolete conventions of morality make American problems exceptionally difficult. The Judge is evidently a wise and broadminded adviser who can win and retain the confidence of young people. The extent to which they go wrong in Denver is appalling.

Although every precaution is taken, the Editor will not be responsible for the loss or damage of manuscripts sent in for consideration; nor can he undertake to return manuscripts which are not accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope.